

THE  
SCRIPTURE-TERMS  
OF  
CHURCH-UNION,

With respect to the

Doctrin of the *TRINITY*:

CONFIRMED

By the *Unitarian Explications* of the *Beginning* of  
*St. John's Gospel*; Together with the *Answers* of the Uni-  
tarians; to the *Chief Objections* made against them: Where-  
by it appears, that *Men may be Unitarians, and Sincere and*  
*Inquisitive*, and that they ought not to be excluded out of the  
*Church-Communion*.

WITH A

*POST-SCRIPT,*

Wherein the *Divinity of Christ*, and of the *Holy Ghost*, ac-  
cording to the *Generality of the Terms of Scripture*, is shewn, *not*  
*to be Inconsistent with the Unitarian Systems*.

Most Earnestly and Humbly Offered to the Consideration  
of those, on whom 'tis most particularly incumbent to ex-  
amin these Matters.

By *A. L.* Author of the *Irenicum Magnum*, &c.

LONDON: Printed, as abovementioned, to be communicated to learned  
and inquisitive Persons, and those who are most obliged to inquire into  
these Points.

# Some TEXTS, Authorising the Subject of this Writing.

**P**rove all things, 1 Theff. 5. 21.

Be ready to give an Answer to every Man, that asketh you a Reason, &c.  
1 Pet. 3. 15.

Whereto we have attained, let us walk by the same Rule, Phil. 3. 16.

To the Law, and to the Testimony, &c. Isa. 8. 20.

Search the Scriptures, John. 5. 39.

Let us follow after the things which make for Peace, Rom. 14. 19.

That I might by all means save some, 1 Cor. 9. 22.

Let us not therefore judge one another any more, Rom. 14. 13.

What I tell you in Darkness, that speak you in Light; and what ye hear in the Ear,  
that Preach ye upon the House tops, Matt. 10. 27.

Overcome Evil with Good, Rom. 12. 21.

To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is Sin, Jam. 4. 17.

Who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness, Rom. 1. 18.

Whoever shall be ashamed of Me and of my Words, of him shall the Son of Man be  
ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, Mark, 8. 38.

They are the Enemies of the Cross of Christ, Phil. 3. 18.

Is a Candle to be put under a Bushel? Mark 4. 21.

Relieve the Oppressed, Isa. 1. 17.

We ought to obey God, Acts 5. 29.

Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures  
of Sin for a season, Hebr. 11. 25.

If the Blind lead the Blind, both shall fall into the Ditch, Matt. 15. 14.

In Understanding be Men, 1 Cor. 14. 20.

They began to make excuse, Luk. 14. 18.

Wherefore when I came, was there no Man? Isa. 50. 2.

They came not to the Help of the Lord, Judg. 5. 23.

I pray God, that it may not be laid to their Charge, 2 Tim. 4. 16.

God has chosen the foolish things of the World, to confound the wise, 1 Cor. 1. 27.

Truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a Prey. And the Lord  
saw it, and it displeased him that there was no Judgment. And he saw that there was  
no Man, and wondered that there was no Intercessour, Isa. 59. 15. 16.

Whoever shall not hear your words, verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the Land  
of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment, than for them, Matt. 10. 14, 15.

Now they have no Cloak for their Sin, John 15. 22.

Let us therefore fear, lest a Promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you  
should seem to come short of it, Hebr. 4. 1.

I speak as to wise Men, 1 Cor. 10. 15.

Whether in pretence, or in truth; Christ is Preached, Phil. 1. 18.

He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not Man, but God, 1 Theff. 4. 8.

O that the Salvation were come to Israel! Pl. 14. 7.

We hid our Faces from him, Isa. 53. 3.

Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the Lord, Pl. 118. 26.

God has made him both Lord and Christ, Acts 2. 36.

The Son can do nothing of himself, John 5. 19.

The Father loveth the Son, and has given all things into his hand, John 3. 35.

That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, — to the Glory of the Father, Phil. 2. 10, 11.



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3. That therefore, First, in the Publick Service, We ought to address the Current of our Prayers to God in general, in the Name and thro' the Mediation of Christ, in the conclusion of them beseeching God to hear us, and grant us our Requests, for the sake of his Dear Son, our Blessed Lord, Saviour and Redeemer; and so, when We address some Ejaculations to Christ, We ought in general to address to him as to our Mediator, most highly exalted, and assisted by the Divine Nature dwelling in him, as aforesaid: Secondly, in our Publick Service likewise, &c. the Terms of Church-Union, We ought to be content with the Apostles Creed, which is worded in a Generality agreeable to that of Scripture: Thirdly, no Subscription or Assent ought to be required of Clergy-Men, in this Matter and its dependents, but so the Expressions of the Scripture is self, or to Terms that agree to the Scripture-Generality, the Clergy-Mens Declaration being admitted of and accepted, that they solemnly subscribe and assent to any of those things, proposed to them; but so far as they are agreeable to the Generality of Scripture. p. 101.

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### The End of the Table.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, World without end. Amen.

### The ERRATA; And some few ADDITIONS.

PAGE 14. Line 43. after *Mysteries* add or *designedly invlicate Texts, which either are sufficiently illustrated elsewhere, or the exact and full knowledge whereof in all particulars is not indispensably necessary.* P. 24. L. 32. after *understanding it.* add *Perhaps by the Divine Word and Spirit, many Christians then understood the Influences of two Divine Powers.* P. 25. L. 33. for *those* read *these.* P. 31. L. 29. f. *admitted* r. *admitted.* P. 32. L. 10. f. *to be Christ* r. *to be the Christ.* P. 34. L. 33. after *implying,* add (*as the said Doctors imagined, who, as was noted in the 26th. Page, held the Trinity of Plato and that of the Gospel to be the same.*) P. 34. L. 43. after *seeming* add *to them.* P. 35. L. 10. after *peculiarly* add *and virtually.* P. 35. L. 19. after *and* add *as was said.* P. 47. L. 14. f. *another* r. *another.* P. 74. L. 2. after *things.* add *Whatever Iniquity is committed in the World, it is thro' the Suggestion of the Devils. Yet there is more Evil done in the World, than Good; tho' undoubtedly there is a greater Number of good, than of bad Angels. Then, surely, at least all the Holy Angels may suffice, to suggest the good Motions that are necessary, in order to the Good that is done upon Earth.* P. 83. L. 43. after *said,* add *In Summ. If the Scripture says in one Place that Christ is our Mediator and exalted by God and made Lord, and in another that his Name is to be called upon; is it not evident, that, joining those Places together, the result thereof is, that We are to call upon Christ, as upon our Mediator, exalted by God and made Lord?* (Acts 2. 36.) P. 85. L. 18. after *observes,* add *many of.* P. 103. L. 41. after *Reason.* add *But if Semi-Arianism be taken to differ essentially from THIS System, it will appear to be encumbered with insuperable Difficulties; and if it absolutely exacts the Use of the Scholastick Trinitarian Terms, it will, as much as the Scholastick System, be contrary to the Generality of the Terms of Scripture.* P. 107. L. 32. after *&c.* add *Doth it not seem contrary to the due Seriousness of Prayer, to address distinctly to the Divine Wisdom, as to a distinct Person, in these terms, O GOD the SON; as if the Divine Wisdom were the SON of another Divine Person?*

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C H A P T E R. I.

*The Occasion and Design of this Paper.*

**T**HE Apostle's Injunction (alone) of *Proving all things*, doth Apologize for and Justify the following Undertaking. The Design whereof, as will appear, is not to set up the *Socinian* or *Arian* Sentiments, but further to Vindicate what on an unshakable Foundation I have heretofore asserted concerning the Necessity of Moderation with respect to these most Intricate Controversies, and to confirm the Scripture-Method of Union which I have Pleaded for in "the Apology for the *Irenicum Magnum*."

No Man can say, that there are no Difficulties in the Holy Scriptures, or that there are there no Articles obscurely deliver'd. For who is he that will pretend he Infallibly understands every thing spoken of in the Bible? If any should ask, to what purpose the Scripture should make mention of such Matters, as are suppos'd so very Obscure and Difficult, that it is not safe nor prudent Magisterially to make exprets Determinations concerning them; I have answer'd, that probably it is, to prove our Sincerity and Industry, (to try whether we will take the Pains seriously and diligently to consider what Measures in reason are here best to be followed in such Intricate Cases,) and so to exercise our Humility and our Moderation. Undoubtedly these Obscure Matters will be more fully discover'd hereafter, and it seems God judgerh it will suffice that we be then most clearly inform'd of them.

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It



It is an ancient Saying, that the Holy Scripture is like a River, which a Lamb may wade, and wherein Elephants may sometimes be forced to swim. That is to say; Those that desire no other but to work out their Salvation, as the case is with Men of ordinary Capacities, may compass their design in the use of God's Word, for they will find therein very clearly whatsoever is absolutely Necessary for them: But the greatest Scholars, that would fain know every thing, and that are bound to inquire as far as they can, will often be at a loss and shall not find themselves able to dive to the bottom of several Particulars, tho' they be Men of the sharpest Wit, as well as of the deepest Learning; witness especially many Passages in the *Apocalyps* or *Revelations*. Wherefore 'tis evident, such difficult Matters ought not to be Magisterially determin'd, not tho' in their true Sense: The taking of them determinately in such a Sense, ought not to be impos'd, or made part of the Terms of Communion. For these things being so very Difficult, Sincere and Inquisitive Men may mistake and differ about 'em, what seems then sufficiently clear to one sometimes seeming otherwise to another, and no one having right to decide Magisterially in such Cases more than another; and it is credible, if the explicit knowledge and belief of these things had been Indispensibly and Universally necessary, God would have reveal'd them more distinctly and expressly.

The Apostle has this Expression, *tho I understood all Mysteries*. Which is an evident Argument, that there are Mysteries in Religion, which the eminentest Christians may misunderstand, or not know how to determine. And in the 14th. of the *Romans* the same Apostle shews, that good Men may doubt, and be of different Sentiments, in some Cases.

Now what do I propose as then fit to be done, but what the Apostle there expressly enjoins, and is manifestly agreeable to the charitable and moderate Temper of Christianity, and to the essential and avow'd Principles of Protestants?

I say, that in most *abstruse* and *intricate* Points, about which *sincere* and *inquisitive* Persons may mistake and differ, we must not judge and reject one another, but must unite in the utmost Generality of the very Expressions of Scripture. The Reasonableness and Necessity of which Method of Union I have evinced, in the (aforementioned) *Irenicum Magnum*, and it's Apology.

If it be ask'd how it shall be known, who are *sincere* and *inquisitive* Persons, or what Points are so *abstruse* and *intricate*; I answer, that must be judg'd of by the Arguments of the different Parties. And hereby I infer, that *Trinitarians* and *Unitarians* ought to bear with one another, and so to order their Terms of Church-Communion as not to be a *Stumbling-Block* to or as not to fright away either of them, because actually both of them bring so considerable Arguments in behalf of their Opinions, that tis obvious *sincere* and *considering* Persons may not always be able to satisfy themselves. which Side is most infallibly or most credibly Certain; and, after all, when God is worshipped, all is incontestably ador'd that is the Object of Divine Worship: We are expressly commanded but to Pray directly to God in the Name or as the Disciples of Christ, who hope to be heard for the sake of Christ and thro' his most acceptable Intercession; and certainly as for Christ's Humanity, it being a Creature and the Mediator between God and Men, it is to be honour'd with a Mediatory or Inferior Honour. As for the rest, (which, then, if rightly taken, would be but a Speculative Difference,)

ference,) the *Trinitarians*, with seeming good cause, are persuaded, that *their Reasons are not despicable*: And in the *Apologia pro Irenico Magno* it is shewn, that the *Unitarian Arguments* are far from being inconsiderable. I do therefore conclude for *Mutual Forbearance, and Union* upon the General Terms aforesaid. For upon the Evidence of both Sides, I conceive, that this is a Controversy, in which Men without being Faulty may mistake.

But against this my Sentiment, some Object, that that cannot be, because *some Texts of Scripture* seem most *Express* against the *Unitarians*, and particularly the *Beginning of St. John's Gospel*. It is therefore very just to consider what the *Unitarians* say to those Texts. I might content my self to refer the Reader to their *Brief History*, a Shilling Book, to be had at most Bookfellers, wherein the several Texts of Scripture, Objected to them, are Explain'd, from *Genesis* to the *Revelation*. But in farther Vindication of my Proposal of the *Scripture-Method of Church Union*, I am willing to give here an *Ensample* of the *Unitarian Explanations*, to shew what they *Answer* in general to the *Objection* from this Topic. And, because the *Beginning of the Gospel of St. John* is commonly reckoned to be most Decisive against them, I have particularly pitched upon that, to represent most evidently that even here they want not something to say for themselves that is probable enough, tho it be not pretended that the Controversy is thereby wholly clear'd from all manner of *Difficulty*. They that approve not that things be thus offer'd to be consider'd, run to the implicit and slavish Faith of the *Romanists*, and take away that Liberty, which not only the Principles of Protestants allow of and recommend, but which is necessary to debate and examine difficult Matters, and to attain with rational assurance to the Truth.

## C H A P. II.

### *The Socinian Explication of the Beginning of St. John's Gospel.*

**S**T. John begins thus his Gospel. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* &c. The Socinians esteem, that the Primitive Christians understood these terms according to this System.

Verse, 1. *In the Beginning.* The Christian Oeconomy being founded upon the Mediation of Christ, (on the account of his being appointed thereunto, and of his being a Man perfectly Innocent, and Obedient, even unto Death,) and not only Fallen Men being granted to the Messiah, but all Creatures in Heaven and Earth being subjected unto him, upon the Conditions of his Undertaking; the Reformation, or New-Modelling of things, by that Illustrious Dispensation, is compared to the Old Creation described in the 1<sup>st</sup>. Chapter of *Genesis*. If God had not resolved to have sent a Redeemer, and if the New Covenant had not taken place of the First Establishment, the Race of Mankind had perished.

Therefore the Saving it is figuratively represented as Creating of it anew, by the glorious Performance of the Bless'd Jesus, the Lamb in God's Prescience and Foreordination Slain from the Foundation of the World. For when *Adam* fell, God made a Resolution to send a new Man, assisted of the Spirit without measure, directed in all points by the Eternal Wisdom what to do and suffer to make a Reparation to the Divine Authority and to obtain the chief place in God's Favour, and on consideration of his perfect Obedience and undeserved Sufferings constituted the King of Men and Angels, and exalted to a Participation of the Divine Power, always ready to work for him at his holy Request, that he might be enabled to Save to the uttermost those that truly Repent and Turn unto God. Wherefore God made a Gracious Promise to our First Parents, and from that moment admitted them to Repentance. But tho' these were the Effects of God's Resolution of sending Christ into the World, and even then the Gospel began in some measure to dawn nevertheless the grand Operation and Manifestation of it was not then made, Christ was not yet Born, and consequently not Personally entered upon his Office. The First Age of the World therefore, tho' it was the beginning of the New Covenant granted upon Christ's account, yet is not expressly reckon'd here as the beginning of Christ's Oeconomy. That is taken properly to commence many Ages after, when the Saviour of the World was come in Person, to do the will of God, and to Reform and New-model all things. Then it is that there is represented as it were a New Creation made. Our Evangelist saith, at the 3d. Ver. of this Chap. that all things were made by Jesus Christ. VVhich the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* thus expresses; *By his Son God made the Worlds*, Heb. 1, 2. And in the 5th. Verse of the 2d. Chapter of the same Epistle, as in all the four Gospels, it is declared what those VVorlds were, and what that Creation was. Seeing then that the Christian Oeconomy is ushered in under the Image of a Creation, it is no wonder that the Evangelist, alluding to the History of the Old Creation, begins his Gospel as *Moses* doth his First Chapter of the *Genesis* by these VVords, *In the beginning*.

But it incontestably appears, by the 1st. and 2d. Verses of the 1st. Chapter of St. Mark's Gospel, what that beginning was; Namely *the beginning of Christ's Dispensation*, which is there shewn to have begun when the Messiah was introduced into the World by his immediate Hardinger *John the Baptist*. *The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God; As it is written in the Prophets, Behold, I send my Messenger before thy Face, &c.* Besides that our Evangelist had seen St. Mark's Gospel, as well as those of St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*, we know the same Holy Spirit that dictated to the one, inspir'd also the other, wherefore we must explaine one Place of Scripture by another. And we are to consider that St. *John* is writing the History of the Gospel of Christ. We may therefore be sure, that by the *beginning* here spoken of is meant the beginning of the New Dispensation that succeeded the Mosaical Oeconomy, and that that New Dispensation began by the Preaching of the immediate Forerunner of the Saviour of the World. For, we see, St. Mark calls that the beginning of the Gospel. And thus 'tis evident St. *John* begins his History by our Saviour's Instalment or his Entering into his Office, which was at that time, when *John the Baptist* was Baptizing, and when our Saviour, being Thirty Years Old, was Baptized of him.

*The Word.* The same term often denotes several things. By *the Spirit*, for instance, several things are signified. In like manner, by *the Word* several things may be implied. What here may be particularly meant thereby, we are carefully to consider. If every thing be duly weigh'd, it will appear that our Evangelist, to go on with his Allusion, calls *the Author of the New Creation* by the Name of *the Instrumental Cause*: to which the *Old* is attributed; Heaven and Earth being represented in the First Chapter of *Genesis* as created by *the Word of God*. And he had warrant enough to extend the Allusion so far, and to bestow that Title to our Saviour; seeing it was not unusual to give it to the Chief Officers of Princes, (See *Grotius, De Jure Belli et Pacis, Lib. 2. Cap. 8. §. 5.*) and seeing the Heavenly Messengers of God, sent to execute his Commandments upon Earth, were known to the Jews under the Name of his *Word*. (Ps. 107. 20. *Wisd.* 18. 15, 16. Which last is the Angel, by whom God smote the First-born of Egypt, and who is call'd *the Destroyer*, *Exod.* 12. 23. which Name appears to be the Designation of the Office of an Angel; *1 Chron.* 21. 12. The Author of the *Wisdom* of Solomon calls him the *Almighty Word* of God, according to his most eloquent and figurative Stile, nor only to denote the Eminency of that Angel, who was one of them that stand before the Divine Throne, but also to declare his Swiftmess and Ability in the executing his Commission, and to illustrate the Fierceness of his Errand. *Philo* calls the Angels *Logous, the Words of God*, as Dr. *Alix* himself observes) There is nothing more common in Scripture, than to put the *Abstract* for the *Concrete*; as, we see, our Lord Jesus Christ constantly calls himself *the Way, the Truth, the Life*, meaning, that He shews the Way to Salvation, that He teaches the Truth, that He procures Eternal Life to all them that will obey Him. By the same Figure He is call'd *the Word*, that being as much as to say, that He is He who brings the *Word of God* concerning the Eternal Gospel, and who is commissioned to do and to declare the Will of God with respect to the Reconciliation of Fallen Mankind. Thus *Origen* (in *Joh.* 1.) interprets it. "Seeing Christ is call'd *the Light* by reason of his Enlightning the World, it is plain He is call'd *the Word* upon the Account of his Office, &c." See the Accounts, why Christ is called *the Word*, judiciously given by *Pasor*, in his *Manuale*, upon the word *Logos*, and by *Beza*, in his *Annotations*, on this First Verse of the First Chapter of *St. John's Gospel*, where he observes that *Nazianzen* and *Austin* give the same Reason with *Origen*, why Christ is called *the Word*, or *God's Word-Bearer* by excellency, or the most Eminent Minister and Executor of God's Commands.

*Was.* *The Word* was in the beginning of the *New Oeconomy*: That is to say; "While *John the Baptist* was Preaching to the Jews, Christ was then in the World, "and was then the Person whom God intended and took for his Chief *Word-Bearer*."

And *the Word* was with God. This design'd *Embassador of God*, and Interpreter of the whole Will of God, in whom the Divine Wisdom and Authority did most Eminently reside, and most Conspicuously shine, who was all his Life-time most Extraordinarily Inspir'd and Assisted of the Holy-Ghost, and of whom it was foretold before his Nativity that He should be a Prince and a Saviour, that He should Save his People from their Sins, and that of his Kingdom there should be no End, the World having been created for him, that thereby God might be glorified; this.

this most Illustrious Person was, upon the Entering on his Office, caught up to the Highest Heaven, that He might behold the Glory to which he was called, that He might converse with God in the eminentest Place and with the brightest Circumstances of Glory, that He might there be most Solemnly endued with the Divine Wisdom and Power, and that He might there have the Honour to receive immediately from God his Commission, and to be most particularly taught, by God Himself, what he was to do and suffer, and how much reason there was for him constantly to undergo and perform all this. (See *John*, 12. 49, 50. *John*, 8. 38. *John*, 6. 51. &c.) Thus, *In the beginning, the Word was with God*; whether both in his Body and Soul, or with his Soul only, it matters not, for the Mind properly is the Man. The Spirit of the Holy Jesus was then taken up into the Highest Heaven. For he saith himself expressly, *John*, 3. 13. that no Man before Ascended up to that Heaven but He who came down from thence, even the Son of Man by excellency, *who was in Heaven*, or had been caught up into Heaven. For every one that understands the Original knows, that the Participle which here our Version hath Translated *is*, may as well be Translated *was*. And accordingly it is thus Translated by *Beza*, *Erasmus*, *Camerarius*, and others on the Place, *John*, 3. 13.

*And the Word was God.* And this Holy and Immaculate Person, that was to be the Great Messenger of the Gospel and the Author and Procurer of Salvation, was then Installed in his Office. He was then Ordained, and Sanctified, and Sent into the World. He was Solemnly constituted the *Messiah*. He was appointed the Chief of the Chief of the Arch-angels as well as of the rest of the Angels. He was made partaker, as much as possible, of the Divine Nature, and particularly of the Divine Wisdom, and Divine Power, on certain conditions; only his fuller communicating to others the Divine Spirit, was reserv'd to his actual Reigning in Heaven, after his Resurrection and most Glorious Ascension. In a word, He was declared to be, upon the performing of his Undertaking, the Heir and Lord of every Creature. He was then, on these Terms, Proclaim'd God's First Minister. He was thus, even then, made a Prince, a Lord, a Sovereign, *acting for God, and by God's Commission*. And that is what the term, *God*, often signifies in Scripture. That most Noble and Glorious Name is there given to Persons, commissioned by God, in most eminent Stations, not only because they are God's Chief Ministers, but because, *acting for and as it were in the stead of God, they do in some measure represent Him*. We see *Exod.* 23. 21. that the Angel, that conducted the Children of Israel, had that High Name and Dignity; for, says God, *my Name is in Him*.

There is nothing more common in Scripture than for those Beings to be said to be what they represent, as also what they are figured by. As Christ saith, that He is the Door and the true Vine, and that the Consecrated Bread is his Body. So Angels and other God's Messengers are said to be God, and are called *Jehovah*. See *Gen.* 18. 1. &c. *Gen.* 19. 13. compared with the 18th, 24th, and 29th, Verses. *Gen.* 31. 11. and 13. *Exod.* 3. 2. 4. and 6. *Exod.* 4. 16. compared with *Exod.* 7. 1. *Exod.* 14. 19. and 24. 1. *Sam.* 3. 21. &c. (Bishop Taylor, in his Sermon on 1. *Sam.* 15. 22. observes, it is a Saying of the Jews, that *Apostolus cujusque est quisque*, every Man's Messenger is himself, or is said and may be said to be himself, and must be censured and reck'ned as himself.)

The



The Names of some of the Chief Angels are God, or the Great God; (which shews that God is the same with Prince or Sovereign, such as was said:) As; Gabriel, which signifies the Mighty God; and, Michael, which signifies Equal to God, or Like the Highest. Agreeably to which Denominations, the Samaritans thought they might give to Simon Magus the Name of the Great Power of God, because probably they conceived him to be assisted of some Mighty Angel. *Act. 8. 10. This Man is the Great Power of God.* The Superior Angels are called Gods, by *Clement Alexandrinus. Strom. L. 5. P. 598.* The whole Army, saith he, of Angels and Gods is subjected to the Son. Whereby, as by many other Passages, it appears, the Primitive Christians thought it not repugnant to Christianity, and the Scripture-Style, to call others Gods besides Almighty God.

The Title of God is particularly given to some Men in Scripture. *Exod. 7. 1.* Moses is said to be God, or a God to Pharaoh, because he was sent on a wonderful and extraordinary Errand to him by God, and was enabled to save and to destroy him. Behold, saith God there to Moses, *I have made thee a God to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy Brother shall be thy Prophet.*

This Text may put us in mind, or cause us to observe, that (as we shall see was remark'd by *Eusebius Pamphilus, De Ecclesiastic. Theolog. Lib. 2. Cap. 17.*) *St. John's* Expression which we are considering should not be rendered the Word was God, but the Word was a God; there being no Article here before the Term God, (as there was in the foregoing Sentence where it was said that the Word was with God, which Sentence therefore should have been Translated was with the God by excellency, or the Supreme God, the Sovereign of all.) This Passage of *St. John* would appear more easy to our Apprehension, if instead of the term God we did read Lord, or Sovereign, because in the Style of our Modern Languages we are not used to appropriate the Title of God to any Creatures as the Scripture doth, but are only wont to give the Appellation of Lord, in common, tho' in divers Senses, to God and to some Great Men in Authority. Thus then we may conceive the First Verse of *St. John's* Gospel to run, according to its true Signification. "In the beginning of the New Oeconomy, while *John the Baptist* was Preaching the Baptism of Repentance as the immediate Introduction of the New Dispensation, the Messiah himself was then in the World; And the Messiah was with the Lord, as Moses was with the Angel in the Mountain before the giving of the Law; And the Messiah was then constituted a Sovereign Lord, or the Chief of those Princely Ministers and High Officers who have the Title of Lord or God communicated to them, tho' in an Inferior Sense to what it imports when it is attributed to the Eternal and Supreme Lord of all. And the Word was with the God, and the Word was a God.

Our Saviour himself observes, *John 10. 34.* that the Title of God was given to Men in the Holy Scripture: Is it not written in your Law, I said, Ye are Gods? If He called them Gods, unto whom the Word of God came, (or to whom God gave a High Commission,) and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of Him whom the Father has Sanctified and Sent into the World, Thou Blasphemeest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

We must needs then ever remember, that the *Stile* of Scripture differs from ours, and that we must not Interpret every thing according to the Sound of Words, but consistently with the whole Scripture and the clear notions of Reason. *Verba non Sono sed Sensu sapiunt*, is an excellent Rule, and a Sentence of St. Hilary's, quoted in Bishop Taylor's Second Sermon upon Tit. 2. 7.

A notable Example of the Title of God being given to Men is that of the 45th. Ps. at the 6. and 7. Ver. where the Author of this Psalm addressees himself thus to Solomon, upon his Marriage with Pharaoh's Daughter, and his being declared King or Heir of the Kingdom by his Father David. *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever: Thou lovest Righteousness and hatest Wickedness; wherefore, O God, thy God has anointed thee with the Oyl of Gladness above thy Fellows.* Here Solomon is expressly called God. It is undoubted that this Psalm in a mystical Sense is applicable to the Messiah, and to his Spiritual Marriage with the Church. But the mystical and secundary doth not take away the first and literal Sense. And it would be most Unreasonable to pretend that this Psalm has no literal Signification. It appears to be the usual way of the Holy Spirit, under the Old Testament, to Shadow the things pertaining to the Christian Oeconomy by real Acts or literal Events then verified or belonging to those times under the former Dispensations. And accordingly we find all the reason in the World, to ascribe a literal Sense to this prophetic and mystical Psalm, and to understand it primarily or originally of the said Wedding of King Solomon. We find it has always been generally so understood. We find it as fitting for that Solemnity as it could be supposed to have been if it had been made for it; and we see it is entituled a *Song of Love*, or a Wedding Poem. The Prince is represented as having his Title newly confer'd upon and assured to him, and as being preferred before his Fellows or Brethren, by his God or King. This suits very well with Solomons Case, and with the Socinian System. But it is inconsistent with the Trinitarian Notions, as much as the Trinitarian Interpretation is repugnant to the Truth of the Divine Unity. For if there be but one God, can it be said to Him *thy God has*, &c? If the term God be here taken in the most eminent Sense of it, there are two Supreme Gods; the one spoken to, and the other spoken of and said to be the God of him that is spoken to; and so a Supreme or Eternal and Infinite God has a God that is his Superior, or, which implies the same thing, has a God that is his God and that confers Honours and Benefits upon him; which is an Absurdity, no less than that of supposing two absolutely Supreme or Essential Gods. Besides, a God, in the most eminent Sense of the word, cannot be said to be anointed. For either his Deity is not true, (or not truly perfect in it self, and so not absolutely divine,) or else it is all-sufficient, and can need no anointing. Even a Man Personally United with God, if that were possible, cannot be supposed to be anointed with the Assisting Spirit, seeing he cannot need it; for such a Person must needs have in himself all that is Great and Necessary. Howbeit, it is the God that is here spoken to: *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever*, &c. And God, in fine, has no Fellows. Nor even has a God-Man Fellows, except there be more God-Men, as there were more Kings Sons besides Solomon. For all these reasons, therefore, those words of this Psalm cannot be understood as the Adversaries of the Unitarians would understand them; and it doth then appear, that another is called God,

God, besides the *Supreme God*. And so it is to no purpose here to Object, that we do not read of any Children by *Pharaoh's Daughter*; and that the Kingdom was not of long continuance in *Solomon's Family*, as we suppose is here promised. First, these might be the Psalmists Wishes, which were very natural on that Occasion, and seemed requisite, *ex Epithalamii lege*, says *Rivetus*. But besides that, there are frequently in Scripture Conditional Promises, even when the Condition is but Tacitely understood and not expressed. And thus it might be promised to *Solomon*, that his Throne would be for ever, or that the Kingdom would be of a very long Continuance in his Family, in Case he and his Children remained true to their Duty. (Ps. 132. 13.) In like manner *Pharaoh's Daughter* might here be promised many Children, who would have been accounted Great Lords and Princes in all the Land of *Judea* and in all the Coasts of *Israel*: And the Reason why that Promise took no effect, might be because she revolted to the Idolatry which undoubtedly she had abjured at her Marriage. At the 10th. and 11th. Verses, the Psalmist addresses himself thus to the Queen: *Hearken, O Daughter; forget thine own People and thy Fathers House; so shall the King greatly desire thy Beauty*. Doth not this Exhortation appear very Suitable to a Princess come out of an Idolatrous Family? And at the same time, doth it not hereby appear, that She is Married to a Prince in whose Country Idolatry was not the National Religion? What Country that was, is evident. And it is added in the following Verse, that the City of *Tyre*, famous for her Rich Trading, would bring Presents to the Queen. Which Suits well with *Solomon's* prosperous Reign. It must then be Unreasonable to suppose, that this Psalm has not a literal Sense, or that that is not the literal Sense thereof, which so well Suits with it, and which, as was observed, has always been reputed to be its primary meaning by the Generality of the best and most learned Interpreters in all Parties. There is therefore visibly all the Reason in the World to believe, that it is *Solomon* that is here called *God*. And why should any (tho' but the least number) among the *Trinitarians* be so averse to own it; or what need is there to be at so much pains to put that matter out of doubt? Are not *Great Men*, in other Places of Scripture, said to be *Gods*? *I have said, ye are Gods*, Ps. 82. 6. Ps. 138. 1. and 4. &c. Why then should not *Solomon* here be called *God*, that is, a *Sovereign Prince*, acting for *God*, by *Gods express Commission* to that purpose, and so in some measure or in some respects representing *God*. Have we not seen that our Saviour himself observed it, that they are called *Gods* unto whom the Word of *God* came? (*John*. 10. 35.) And at what occasion did our Saviour make that Observation? That also, to the purpose before us, is well worth the being noted. It was when the *Jews* reproached to him, that he Equalled himself to *God*, and, as they judged, made himself the Most High *God*. And now what doth he Answer to that Charge? Doth he say, that he was literally the *Eternal God*, and that a Second Divine Person was incarnate in him; or doth he leave any Room for any such conceit, or rather do's he not expressly obviate and refute it? This is manifestly the whole meaning of his Answer. "Why should you think, that I make my self the Most High *God*? Is it because I am called *God*, or the *Son of God*? And don't you know that in your own Law it is written of some Great Men, *I have said ye are Gods and the Sons of the Highest*? Were those Men therefore to be re-

"puted *Homousian* Sons of God, or of the same *Essence* with the Father? No. Neither am I therefore any more to be thought so." If we take not that Answer, and Reasoning of our Saviour's in this Sense, it seems we make of it a mere Shuffling, and an Equivocating Discourse, nothing to the purpose, and absolutely unworthy the Gravity of the Speaker, as seems obvious upon an impartial Reading of the Text. \* Howbeit, it doth here suffice us, that

(\* John 10. 33, 34, 35, 36. *The Jews answered him, Saying. For a good Work we Stone thee not, but for Blasphemy, and because that thou being a Man, makest thy self God. Jesus answered them, Is it not Written in y<sup>r</sup> Law, I said, Ye are Gods? If He called them Gods, unto whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be Broken: Say ye of Him whom the Father has Sanctified and Sent into the World; Thou Blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?* )

Christ is called God, unless they can expressly shew, that he is the Supreme God, actually equal to and of the same *Essence* with the eternal God, and that the Father is not greater than he.) I shall only add, concerning the aforesaid Answer of our Saviour's, that, if he had been the Most High God, it seems, he dissembled it, at an occasion that required the speaking it out; or else, as was said, it seems, there can be shewn no connection or coherence in his Reasoning. For so it would run, according to the *Trinitarian* Exposition. "Jesus answered them, are not some Men called Gods in Scripture? How can ye then say of Me, that I Blaspheme, because what I say, implies, I am the Most High God?"

### C H A P. III.

#### *A Continuation of the Socinian Explication.*

**B**UT it is time to go on to what remains to be explained of the beginning of *St. Johns Gospel*. We have done with the First Verse, wherein it is generally thought there lies the greatest Difficulty. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* That last Clause, *the Word was God*, may seem to most of us the hardest expression; that way of speaking not being usual with us, as was observed. But at the same time we have seen, that the Scripture calls Kings and Great Men Gods: *I have said Ye are Gods.* We have no reason therefore to think it strange, that the Messiah, the Highest Officer in the World, *the Prince of Men and Angels*, and the King of Kings, should be also honoured there with the most illustrious Title that was ever given to any in the most eminent Station, and be

be accordingly called *God, or a God, or Sovereign Lord.* The Scripture called them *Gods, unto whom the Word of God came.* *John, 10. 35.* That is to say, those whom God made his Chief Officers, and to whom God gave Commandment and Commission to act in some measure in his stead. Thus it appears Christ might well be called God; (the Mediatory Kingdom of the Universe being given him, or he being made the Sovereign of all under the Father:) Which being set into so great a light, we need but to paraphrase a few Verses more, and give some reasons for our Exposition of one Expression or two therein.

Verse 3. All that concerns the Establishment of the Christian Oeconomy, and of the Christian Church, (which is the New Creation,) has been done by Christ, and by his orders and procurement. Here on Earth, having Preached the Doctrine of Repentance by his immediate Precursor and by his other Ministers, (as he had even done in some measure before his Birth, by the Prophets and Patriarchs, for it was upon his account that God sent them, the Messiah being before them in God's Decree, and they being therefore to be looked upon as the Messiah's Officers, and what the Officers do being to be ascribed to him in whole Name or in whole Stead they act,) and himself having fully declared the nature and intentment of the Gospel, He offered up himself as a Sacrifice for our Sins to God; and thus, having laid the Foundation of his Church, confirmed his Doctrine by his Resurrection and innumerable Miracles, and Commissioned his Apostles and Chief Disciples, (all which may be called the Building of his House, which he purchased with his Blood,) He left this World. Being ascended into Heaven, He New-modelled things there too by his Presence. He ordered and disposed them on a new foot and in a new manner. For, being exalted at the right hand of God, He took possession of his Dignity and Authority of a Sovereign Prince in the Heavenly Places. Angels were there then no longer God's Chief Ministers, but were then most particularly subjected unto the Lord Jesus Christ; and He appointed them their Stations, or confirmed them in their Places and Offices, and He daily gives them orders and commissions, as he sees best, for the Service of his Church and the Government of the Universe. (Yet it is not to be forgotten, that Christ is but a Mediatory or Subordinate King, having not his Kingdom of himself, but from the Father, and by the Father's gift; wherefore the Honour to be paid to Christ is not direct or ultimate, but Inferior and Mediatory, to the Glory of the Father; Christ, tho' a Sovereign and the King of all Creatures, being the Father's Substitute or Sub-delegate, and acting in the Father's Name, and by the Father's Power and Wisdom: And therefore, he thus representing God at the Head of the Universe, we accordingly honour him, and worship the Divine Wisdom and Power in him.)

Verse 4. In him was Life. God was with him, directed and assisted him, and dwelt in him. By him, then, Life was procured to fallen Mankind. And the Light of his Doctrine, of his Works and Miracles; and of the Spirit, or Divine Inspiration, dwelling in and communicated by him, was the Life of Men: He brought Immortal Life to light thro' the Gospel; And God gave him Power to give Eternal Life to his Obedient Disciples.

Verse 9. That was the true Light, which, coming into the World, lighteth all Men, Jews and Gentiles. Our Saviour, when he appear'd in the World, did not



design to instruct a particular Nation only, but purposed to set up such a Light as might shine to the utmost Parts of the Earth.

Verse 10. This Great Messenger of God appear'd among Men, and Men were as it were a new Created by him, for He Redeemed the Race of Mankind with his Blood; yet the generality of Men perceived not that that Illustrious Person was Him whom God did set forth for their Saviour. Men loved Darkness rather than Light, tho' it was so abundantly and so mercifully offer'd them.

Verse 11. *He came unto his own*, &c. If God had not intended to have given a Saviour to Men, as was said, He would have destroyed this World; but having resolv'd, in the case of Man's Fall, to provide a Redeemer, God had this Intercessor in his eye and mind when He created our Heaven and Earth, (and some understand in that Sense those expressions, that in the beginning the Word was with God, that from the beginning this illustrious Messenger was design'd to be the *Messiah*, to be the Sovereign of the Universe, to be the great King most eminently representing God, and the general Governor, for God, and in God's stead, at God's right Hand, and that therefore God made *this* World by him, that is to say, for him, and so by him *intentionally*, the business of his Dispensation; to the highest Glory of God, being *the final Cause of the Creation of this World*;) and accordingly when our Saviour set upon his Office, God, upon the Conditions of his Undertaking, gave Mankind to him, to be saved and reform'd by him, particularly those that had some good dispositions, and primarily and especially the People of the *Jews*. *These* were then *his own*, most peculiarly.

He made them: As it is said, in the foregoing Verse, he *had made the World*, (or the World was made by him) in that he preserv'd them and all the World by his Undertaking; seeing that, without it, after *Adam's* Fall, Mankind had perished, like the fall'n Angels. He ought then truly to be considered as the Maker of Men, or as the Person from whom all fall'n Men held their Life and Being. And therefore without doubt, fall'n Men, and among them the *Jews* in particular, his Countrymen and the special People of God, may well be called *his own*.

*And his own received him not*. These Men, to whom were given the Divine Oracles, and among whom Christ was born, and lived, and did mighty Works, and was baptized and proclaim'd the *Messiah* by *John the Baptist* and by the *Holy Ghost*; these blind and sensual Men, liked him not; they thought his Doctrine too pure to be a Religion fit for them, and his Person too mean and despicable to be their Deliverer. Thus the World knew him nor and received him not, notwithstanding all the Attestations of Heaven that this was their Maker, their Saviour, and the Mighty Prince that God design'd them.

Verse 14. *And the Word WAS Flesh*. So we must render it; and not *was made*. It is the same Expression that is used at the beginning of the 6th. Verse, where it is said, *There WAS a Man sent from God*. If the *Trinitarian* Sentiment was not impossible concerning three eternal and supremely Divine Persons, as it expressly seems to be, yet it could not truly be said, that *God was made Flesh*. But the *Trinitarian* Sentiment appears to imply many express Contradictions. It seems therefore every way against Reason to render this Text as the *Trinitarians* do. It must then be Translated as we have done. For, as was observed, the term doth bear that Sense.

*The*

*The Word was Flesh.* *Flesh*; that is to say, "a mortal Man encompassed with all the infirmities, or appearing in the low form and meanest circumstances, of Human Nature, (not implying Sin.)" See *Hebr.* 2. 14. *Mark.* 13. 20. *Gen.* 6. 12. *Deut.* 5. 26. *Jerem.* 12. 12. 1. *Cor.* 15. 50. That is then it seems of somewhat a greater force and significancy than if the Evangelist had barely said, that the *Messiah* was a Man; the saying that He was *Flesh*, being as much as to say, that, as to his Nature and Being, he was but a Man, an ordinary Man, like other Men, a very Man, or true Man, made up of Soul and Body, subject to Want and Temptation, to Hunger and Thirst, and to all the like Frailties and Accidents of Human Nature. (By the last quoted Texts it appears that this is imported by the term *Flesh*, which in the Oriental Languages is a proper expression to that purpose, tho' in our Tongue, like many other Scripture Phrases, it seems odd; but we ought to remember, that the Bible was not originally written in English; we must therefore carefully attend to the stile of the Scripture, and explain one Place by another, that we may understand it right.)

But tho' it be certain the *Messiah*, the Prime Minister and Chief Messenger of God, was a poor mortal Man, subject to the Pains and Sufferings incident to Humanity, from which miserable state and wretched circumstances, being perfectly innocent, he might have been exempt, but to which, for the sake of Men and for the Redemption of Mankind, he freely subjected himself; yet, as the Evangelist at the same time doth here observe, he was not without some conspicuous and most illustrious Rays of Glory, the Glory of being own'd by God for the *Messiah*, the Glory of bringing and procuring the most excellent Revelation, and the Glory of working as great and as many Miracles as he pleas'd, and when he pleas'd, such a Glory as declared that the Father dwelt constantly in him, and as bespoke him to be the great Messenger or divine Word, and the only-begotten or most beloved Son, of God. Such a Glory was seen in him; as the Glory of the Son of God, or as a Glory worthy of the Son of God by excellency. Nevertheless, to all other outward appearances and circumstances, he was content to be as the meanest and most contemptible Men. *And the Word was Flesh.*

Now it was very pertinent to the Design of the Evangelist, to use that expression. For it seems to be his chief Aim, to shew that Christ the Word was but a Man. It is commonly thought, that he wrote his Gospel purposely to oppose the Heresies of *Cerinthus*. We are told, (*Iren.* L. 1. C. 25. and *Euseb.* L. 3. C. 25.) *Cerinthus* maintained, that *Jesus*, born of *Mary*, was not the Word or Christ, but that the Christ, or the *Logos*, that is to say, the Word, the Divine Messenger, or Wisdom, or Proclaimer of the Wisdom of God, was an *Hypostasis*, or real Person, subsisting of it self, an *Eternal* and *Divine* Substance, different from *Jesus*, but dwelling in him while he was on Earth, and working wondrous Works by him. Now in opposition to this, St. John asserts that the Word was *Flesh*, was truly a Man, and but a Man, a frail mortal Man, like other Men, tho' indeed the most dignified of all Creatures, as he declares at the First Verse, where he calls him a God, which is the Highest Name that *Cerinthus* gave to the Word. Well; says St. John, the Word was a God, but then the God was but a Man, tho' he was the Son of God, the Prince of all Creatures, and the designed Lord of Men and Angels.

*The Word was a God; and the Word was Flesh.* That is then as if the Evangelist had said: "The Gnosticks call the Word a God; so do I too; but at the same time I declare that the Word is such a God as is but a Creature, and is no other but the Man Jesus, who was God's only begotten Son, being born of a Virgin by the Power of God, and who was anointed with and constantly assisted by the Holy Spirit. This is the Christ, and the God Word. Those then are mere Fables, which the Gnosticks and Cerinthians hold, of the Christ his being an I know not what uncreated Logos, and Divine Hypostasis, proceeding out of the Bythos or Abyss, and ordered by the Father to dwell in the Man Jesus.

After all, it is not absolutely certain, whether St. John wrote against Cerinthus. We have not so much as the Assertion of any one of the Ancients for it, before St. Jerom. And as for Cerinthus his Opinions, tho' it may be that some of 'em were extraordinary bad, yet we know nothing of them but by the report of his Adversaries. And tis no new thing for such, to give but an indifferent and imperfect account of the Sentiments of those that differ from 'em, and to raise Stories disadvantageous to them, which good Men, such as was Ireneus, took afterwards upon trust. However, we see that St. John declares the Word to be the Man Jesus Christ, and in many Places of his Gospel shews him to be a Creature. And, if Ireneus was well informed himself and has informed us right, Cerinthus held this erroneous Opinion, that the Word is a real, eternal, Divine Person, and consequently that there are more Divine Persons than one. Those of Ireneus his Party, most probably, found fault with Cerinthus, because (besides his Superstition for the Law) he had not the same Notion of the Word, that they had. Cerinthus, it seems, believed the Word to be a real Divine Person, equal to the Father, as the real Trinitarians do. And probably Ireneus was an Arian, or at most a Semi-Arian. What Grotius says of the Occasion of St. John's writing this Gospel, may be seen in his Annotations: The Unitarians, consistently to their System, may hold all, that he there says of the Word.

Verse 15. John the Baptist bare witness of him, saying, This is he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he is before me. As if the Baptist had said. Tho', then, this Man, (as it is at the 30th. Verse,) that cometh after me, enters upon his Office but when I have almost done mine; yet he is called to an Higher Office and Dignity than mine, for he is my Superior, my Lord, and my Prince; he is the Messiah, the Saviour of the World, a most Holy Man, the Son of God, the designed Sovereign of the Universe; and I am but his Servant and Harbinger.

Whereas the Vulgate has translated, *This WAS he of whom I spake, Beza* shews there is no reason but that it may be rendred, *This IS he.* In like manner, we need not read he WAS before me, but he IS. Thus it runs more naturally. *This is he of whom I spake, or said, He that cometh after me, is preferred before me, for he is before me.*

*Is preferred before me.* That is then, *is preferred to an Higher Office and Dignity than mine.* Which saying the Baptist explains (tho' somewhat obscurely, as are expressed all the like Mysteries, on the infallible understanding of which most credibly Salvation depends not, and which seem intended to try our Humility and Moderation as well as our Attention and Industry) by adding.

*For he is before me. Before me.* Or, as it is in the Original, *Protos mou, Princeps meus, My Primate*, the designed Head and Saviour of the Church, and Lord of Men and Angels. And this explains and particularizes, or intimates, how Christ's Office is greater than that of the Baptist's. See *Erasmus* and *Grotius* upon the Place.

Verse 18. *Which is in the Bosom of the Father.* Or which WAS, or has been, namely, when, immediately before his entering on his Office, Christ was taken up into the Highest Heavens. See *John*, 3. 13. Sometimes that Phrase, *to be in the bosom*, signifies *to be most Dear*. See *Numb.* 11. 12. *Deut.* 13. 6.

By these remarks and hypotheses, the *Socinians* conceive, the beginning of *St. John's Gospel* is made plain and intelligible. And they believe that by the same means, by using the like care and attention, all the other Texts, which the *Trinitarians* object, may also be made to appear consistent with the Unity of God, with the whole Scriptures, and with Reason.

## C H A P. IV.

### *The ARIAN System.*

THE *Arians* do not much dislike the foregoing Exposition, excepting that they are persuaded it is short as to these Particulars, in that the *Socinians* do not hold our Saviour's Soul to have præ-existed before its Conception, and, consequently, do not admit it to have been an Instrument in the first Creation of the World: But the *Arians* maintain both these Points. It is true, say they, the Word, the Son of God by excellency, is a Creature, (tho' most intimately assisted of God, which the *Socinians* do not deny;) Christ is a true Man, made up of a Body and Soul only, and not of an absolutely eternal Hypostasis also, or infinite Person, of the same numerical Essence with the Father: But then, say they, this Man's Soul was not only before Abraham, but even was the first Created Spirit. (*John*, 17. 3.) For so the Scripture calls him expressly the First-born of every Creature, or the Beginning of the Creation of God, and terms him by eminency the Image of the invisible God; *Col.* 1. 15. *Revel.* 3. 14. &c. Moreover it is asserted, that by him God made the Worlds; *Heb.* 1. 2. And *St. John* says positively, that without him was not any thing made that was made; *John*, 1. 3. Which expressions seem too extensive, to be restrained to the New-Creation only. All things then were made by him.

And therefore the First-born of every Creature must be so transcendently Excellent, as incomparably farther to surpass originally all Men and Angels in Excellency of Nature, Wisdom and Power, than they surpass the meanest of the Brute Beasts. In a word, the *Arians* believe, that that Holy Spirit, whom the Scripture calls the First-Born, (and who in process of time was made the Soul of the Messiah) is originally as Perfect a Being, and as like unto God, as Divine and Almighty Power could produce, and as can possibly be imagined, saving the Unity of God; seeing it is said he had a Part in the Creation of the World, in which God

most

most efficaciously assisted him, and it is represented as the highest Liberality to Man-kind that God gave his Son to Redeem Men. The *Arians* then say, that the *First-born* is *Omniscient*, or as like the Divine Essence, beside that he is as much assisted by the Divine Nature, as it is possible for a Creature to be. And they believe he was produced in the Duration of Eternity, and before Time, that is to say, before the Creation of the World. And in that sense, like the *Semi-Arians*, they will not scruple to say, that the *First-born* is *Eternal*, so it be remembered that he was made, and that he is not an uncreated Being, it being impossible there should be two uncreated Beings, or two Gods in the proper sense of the word: But the *First-born* is a God next to God, and as *Eternal* as it is possible for the Excellentest Creature to be.

If it be asked, how the *First-born* could be Instrumental in the making of Angels; it may be answered, that a Part might be assigned to him therein, that we know not of. It has been held by many, that the Souls of Men are produced by the Parents. If so, it cannot be thought impossible, but that God might have endued the most excellent created Spirit with Power to Produce other Spirits. But perhaps Angels have fine Vehicles, which are Part of their Being, as a Human Body is Part of a Man. And then the *First-born* might be assisting in the preparing of these Vehicles, when God had Created the Substance thereof.

When the *First-born* was created, then was also another eminent Spirit (or other eminent Spirits, according to some Modern *Arians*) produced, but inferior to him, and called in Scripture the *Holy Spirit*. Thus far the *Arians* hold. It may be that by this (or these) last, not only an Archangel, (or the Archangels, 1. Tim. 5. 21.) but the whole Body of Angels, is to be understood; for they often seem to be meant, when the Scripture speaks of the *Holy Spirit*: And, if so, they also were instrumental in the Creation of the World, as well as the *First-born*, tho' not so eminently as he, but under him. Which doth not import, that the Angels or the *First-born* produced Creatures into being out of Nothing. But, the Chaos being created or prepared by Almighty God, then, for reasons not perfectly known to us, God thought good to set the *First-born*, and the *Holy Angels*, in their several stations, to work upon it, and He directed and enabled them to concur with Him in the disposing and setting of it into a regular frame and beautiful and convenient order. (It is now the constant course of Nature, that Creatures produce other Creatures. A like Power then, in an incomparably higher degree, might undoubtedly be given by God to incomparably more excellent Beings. It may be said that by the Sun all things in the World live and grow, and that without him no living thing subsists or can subsist. And could God create no intelligent, spiritual and invisible Beings, Superior to the Sun in Power and Verue? Why should we think the Material Sun to be God's *Ne plus ultra*, or his powerfulest and excellentest Creature possible?) Thus then the Holy Spirits of God, and, among the rest and in the Chiefest Place, that Most Excellent Spirit which afterwards took Flesh of the *Virgin Mary*, and was the Soul of the ever Blessed *Jesus*, and next after him that Holy Spirit who is the Chief of the Angels, or the select Angels, sat and moved upon the Face of the Waters, and helped to give the Chaos a Motion and to hatch it into a World. It is certain that God alone might as easily have done all this, as with the concurrent Assistance of his Son, or Chief Minister, and of his Angels. But it may be He had a mind thereby to exercise



ercise their Talents, and to try their Obedience, Affiduity, Diligence, and Faithfulness in his Service. Probably it adds to the Happiness of virtuous and holy Spirits to be doing something in the service of God. It is also possible God would cause them to have a hand in that Work, to endear the whole Creation to them, and them to all rational Creatures according to the natural Duties of Gratitude. What has cost us some labor we commonly have a great affection for, witness the love of Mothers to their Children. It cannot then but be a great satisfaction to the Holy Spirits to look upon Men as in some measure their Production as well as their Pupils. That will naturally give them an extraordinary tenderness for Mankind. Now there is a Pleasure in Love, and in doing good. And that the Holy Angels might not want that rational, solid and durable Pleasure, God, according to this System, thought good to employ them in his Works. It is then no Argument that God could not employ them therein, because He is himself All-sufficient thereto, being Almighty. Tho' God can easily do all things alone, and is properly the only Creator, yet we daily see that He makes use of Instruments, or Means and Second Causes. We have then no reason to stagger at that assertion of the Scripture, that by and with that Holy Spirit that was born of the Virgin Mary, God had made the World or drawn Order out of the Chaos, and dispos'd all the Parts of the Universe in their due Places and Frame.

Tho' that Holy Spirit was the First born of every Creature and a most excellent Image of God, yet, immediately after that he was produced, before the being of Time or the Production of Angels and of the Material Creation, it may be that God created many more Spirits of almost a like Kind and Dignity, or incomparably above the Angelical Nature, and that the Soul of the *Messiah* had then no Superiority besides that of Order over them, but these were in a manner or in other respects equals, subject only to God, and equally Superior to the Holy Angels, an equal number of the Angels and inferior Spirits being put, when created as they were afterwards, under those principal Lords, or Gods according to the Scripture-stile. But when the Lord *Jesuw* was become Man, and especially after He had shed his Blood upon the Cross and was risen from the Dead and ascended again into Heaven, then He was made the Prince and Sovereign, under Almighty God, of all Archangels, as well as of all Angels and of all other Creatures. It seems necessary to suppose that then began his Superiority over all the sublimest Angels and all Creatures, because the Scripture represents that as the Reward of his Obedience, and of the constant and faithful Performance of his Undertaking. So that if there were no created Spirits of almost the like Excellency with him, yet, from the very beginning that there were Angels, there might be many Archangels, which were not wholly subjected to him, tho' of a nature very much inferior to his, but had, like him, an immediate access to God, and were then accountable to God alone, altho' at the first, at their Creation, God had left it to the *First-born* to appoint to each of them their Office and Station. Perhaps the *Socinian* Exposition is here to take place, as to the Creation of Dominions and Powers by our Lord *Jesuw Christ*: and the *First-born* inherited not the Dominion till after the Performance of his Undertaking for Mankind. And perhaps the Eternal Continuation of Glory, was the Reward proposed to Christ.

These things may exactly be some of these ways, for ought any body knows. And there is no reason to look upon the *Arian* System as incredible, upon the account that during the Agony which our Blessed Saviour underwent, a little before his Passion, an Angel was sent to strengthen him. Creatures may sometime need to be put in mind of those things which they already know. We daily see that good Men are much comforted and edified by the Exhortations of other Men like themselves, and sometimes inferior to themselves. Our Saviour was become a Man, and was then under such streights as are most dreadful to Human Nature. He wanted therefore external Assistances, the Powers of his Spirit being depressed to the Measure of a Human Soul at its Incarnation. But it was afterwards raised above its former Grandeur, being exalted to Sit at the right hand of God.

The first Verses of St. *John's* Gospel, and the other Texts relating to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, are very easy and intelligible, being taken in a Sense agreeable to this System. But as to the *Holy Spirit*, it may be the Scripture means chiefly thereby the *Holy Inspiration* and an Influence of the Power of God.

## C H A P. V.

*The Answers of the Unitarians, to the Chief Objections commonly made against their Expositions in General; and First the Answer, to the Objected Antiquity and Universality of the Trinitarian Sentiment.*

THE Trinitarians urge, that all the *Unitarian Expositions* may in general, and all at once, be confuted by this one consideration; That theirs is the old, prevailing Sentiment. To evince which, besides the Writings of the Fathers since the Council of *Nice*, and some Passages out of the *Ante-nicene*, they quote *Pliny's* Letter to *Trajan*, wherein he acquaints him that Christians Sang Hymns to Christ as to a God, and *Lucian's Philopatrius*, where mention is made of the God of Christians his being one in three and three in one. Now, say the Trinitarians, it hereby appears that ours is the Primitive Doctrin, and that 'tis most credible it is agreeable to the true sense of Scripture, it being the general Sentiment of the Disciples of the Apostles, and their Successors in the following Ages.

And, further to evince the *Antiquity, Universality and Credibility* of the *Trinitarian* Doctrin, some add; that the ancient *Jews* and the *Heathens* have believed a *Trinity in Unity*: to which purpose they quote *Plato*, *Philo's Works*, the *Cabbala*, or Tradition, delivered from Father to Son since the time of *Moses*, and the *Chaldaick Paraphrase*, wherein the *Word of God* seems to be represented as a *Person*. To all this the *Unitarians* answer, in the following Particulars.

( 1. ) The *Jews* have never held the Doctrin of three Persons in God: And as for the Authority of the *Heathens*, it cannot much credit the *Trinitarian Cause*.

( 2. ) The

( 2. ) The Passages, in *Pliny's* Letter, and in the Dialogue entituled *Philopatris*, are incontestably invalid Arguments.

( 3. ) No very considerable Argument can be drawn out of the *Ante-nicene* Authors, because they were but few that wrote, and it was not impossible for them to deviate from the Simplicity of the Gospel.

( 4. ) Many excellent Works of the Primitive Writers have been suppressed and destroyed, which were most exprefs for the *Unitarian* Sentiment.

( 5. ) Of the few remaining Writings, that are ascribed to the Fathers of the first three Centuries, 'tis very credible that some are corrupted and some supposititious.

( 6. ) Howbeit, it still in a great measure appears, that the generality of the Primitive Christians were *Unitarians*, and even that the generality of the remaining Authors of the first three Centuries were far enough from being of that Opinion which now is called *Orthodox*, it being evident that they incline more to the *Unitarian* than to the *Trinitarian* Sentiment of the latter Ages.

( 7. ) The prevailing Sentiment of the following Ages is of no weight against the *Unitarians*.

( 8. ) The Prevalency in general of an Opinion is no Argument, that it is agreeable to Truth and acceptable to God.

( 9. ) The only Authority therefore, that we can and ought to rely upon, is that of the Bible.

( 1. ) *The Jews have never held the Doctrine of three Persons in God: and as for the Authority of the Heathens, it cannot much credit the Trinitarian Cause.* The *Unitarians* readily grant the *Trinitarian* Sentiment to be *Heathenish*, seeing it effectually sets up a Plurality of Gods, or several supremely and really Divine Persons: And they think it very probable that at first some Christians took this Doctrine out of *Plato's* School, whose Philosophy was generally studied and admired, tho' perhaps the original meaning of it as to this Point was little understood or considered by the generality of his Disciples. For there is much reason to believe that *Plato*, and those of the same Sentiment with him, who believed but one God, at first *personalized* the essential or chief *Attributes of the Deity*, to accommodate themselves to the Theology of the *Heathens*, to hide and take off the Odium of their own Notions of the Divine Unity, which otherwise would have been looked upon as next to *Atheism*, wherefore they would seem to hold more *Divine Persons* or more *Gods* than one, it being reckoned essential to Religion to own a *Plurality* of Gods: These Philosophers therefore so reasoned about the Divine Attributes, as if they really held several distinct Gods. Indeed 'tis very credible, that many of 'em afterwards were induced to Error by those Expressions, and Philosophized so high about them that they lost themselves and understood not what they said. But as for *Plato*, 'tis very likely that he meant by his several *Persons* but the several *Attributes* of the same Divine Being; only he was willing to veil his Sentiment, for fear of exposing himself to *Socrates* his fate, having no mind to suffer for his Opinion. This appears in his Letters to *Dionysius*, wherein he tells him; "It is difficult to find out the Father of the Universe, and when you have found him it is not lawful to divulge it to the People.—I shall then speak of this subject enigmatically, that every one may not be able to understand me." He sets up therefore a *Trinity* above all other Gods or Angels, and; as may be gathered

thered from his Cautiousness, from his Sentiment and that of *Socrates* of one God; and from the Current of his Expressions, by this *Trinity* he understood infinite Goodness, infinite Wisdom, and infinite Love or Power; but, to wrap up his Doctrin under mysterious terms, he represents this *Trinity* as being three Divine *Hypostases* or *Persons*: He says, the first is the Origin of the other two; the Good Being or the first Principle is the Father of the Reason or Wisdom, which he has begotten and made and produced, (and, so, it might be considered by some as a Creature God; and the First-born of the Good Being;) and the Love or Power is the third most excellent God, and the second Production of the Good. This Theology, most obscurely expressed, *Plato's* Followers have explained according to their own Imaginations, till they made it by their Explications still more obscure and more unintelligible. But of what Authority are these Philosophical Fancies and Heathenish Mysteries? Tho' it seem to some that they may be accommodated to some Expressions in Scripture; yet there is no reason to interpret Scripture by that fanciful and fantastical Rule, as is well observed by *Bega*, who calls those Philosophical Conceits *Platonica Deliria*, in his Annotations on *John*, 1. 1. Whether or no some Heathen Sages before *Plato*, may then have had the like thoughts and design with him, so that he was in some measure but an imitator of them; what is that also to Christians? What if *Parmenides* had learned of the *Pythagoreans*, and *Pythagoras* of *Pherecides*, the Notion of three Hypostases, so that the accommodation of Polytheism to a dissembled Unitarianism was perhaps older than *Plato* by an Age or two? And what if the Authors of this Theology, whoever they were, took these Hypostases to be real Deities? Ought such an Egyptian Darkness to be of any weight with Us? And can we make it a Question, Which is the best; either to regard these Heathenish Philosophical Whimsies, or to be guided by the clear Light of Reason and the most express Texts of Scripture? After all, the Platonick Cant is so obscure, that, for ought that can be pretended to the contrary, all that Platonism implies of a Trinity, may amount to no more than Semi-Arianism or even Arianism.

As for the Opinion of the Jews. Tho' it be certain that the People of God were Unitarians, yet it is not impossible but that a few of their Metaphysick Wits might Philosophize after the way of Heathen, and be insatuated with *Plato*, and conceive, as well as many Christians, that those strange and admired Speculations might agree with Scripture, and be reconciled with the Doctrin of the Unity of God. But of what consequence is the Particular Fancy of three or four Visionaries to the whole Body of the Jews? Because these wanderers strayed aside from the Simplicity of Religion, and preferred the arbitrary Notions of a vain Philosophy before it; doth it follow that the generality of the Jews were Platonists?

As for *Philo*, *Eusebius* conjectures, and *Photius* expressly affirms, that he was a Christian; if so, it must be a Platonick Christian, or kind of Semi-Arian. Some then have thought it not impossible but that this *Philo*, whose Works we have, is not he who went on the Embassy to *Caligula*, but is another *Philo* of the Second Century: Neither do they think it impossible but that the Monks may have very much corrupted his Writings. Indeed it seems improbable that a Jew should have written all that is attributed to *Philo*. Howbeit, it suffices that he was a Platonist, and had a great many extravagant Notions. See Mr. Nye's Second Letter to a Peer, p. 66. &c.

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After all, the *Platonists*, as was observed, are very obscure. And some contend, that all that *Philo* says of a *Trinity*, amounts not above *Arianism*. See *Sandi. Hist. Eccl. enucl. Lib. 1. Secul. 1.*

But what do we say of the *Cabbala*, or Traditionary Knowledge delivered from Father to Son since the time of *Moses*? Why, in good earnest; what can we say of it, but that it is a Chimera, a rabbinical Legend, a pharisaical Device, to deceive the People, and make every thing pass as Sacred that the Doctors please. All Protestants look upon *Tradition*, as a most unsafe and uncertain Means of transmitting from Age to Age Divine Truths, and as no fixed Rule of Religion. And we see Our Saviour never mentions the *Jewish Tradition* but to oppose it. After all, it can never be shewn that the *Cabbala* asserts a *Trinity of Persons in God*. Ever since that Doctrin has been broached, the generality of the *Jews* have expressed the Offense they have taken at it, and have made it an Objection against Christians. *Origen* says, that, tho' he had often disputed with the *Jewish* Rabbins that were of most esteem, he never saw any of them approve this Doctrin, that the Word is God, or a God, (in the *Platonick* or *Trinitarian* Sense.) And he asserts, that it is not the Opinion of the *Jews*, that the *Messias*, whom they expect, is to be a God, or a Divine Person, but they believe he is to be a meer Man, and an Earthly King. *Con. Cels. L. 2. p. 79. and L. 4. p. 162.* See *Bull. Judic. Eccl. p. 170.* And in *Mr. Nye's 2d. Letter to a Peer*, p. 50, 51, 52. you may see some more Quotations to the same purpose out of *Justin Martyr*, *St. Athanasius*, and others. Indeed some *Jewish* Books treat very mysteriously and sometimes almost unintelligibly of the Names and Attributes of God. Howbeit, the Authors never meant thereby so many Divine Persons, or any more than one such Person, the *Jews* all along strongly opposing the Doctrin of more Persons than one in God. As for the manifestly forged Writings of some Christians, they are not to be attributed to the *Jews*. See *Mr. Nye's 2d. Letter*, p. 53. You may see his Account of the *Cabbala*, in his 3d. Letter. p. 100. &c. *Maimonides* determines this Matter in these words; *There are some things*, says he, *in which Jews, Mahometans, and Christians, do agree.*——But the *Mahometans* and *Christians* have divers Doctrines, that are peculiar to themselves; the Doctrin (for instance) of the *Trinity* is proper to *Christians*, and to defend it they have been obliged to invent some very singular Principles. *More Nevochim. Part. 1. Chap. 71.* *Mr. Nye* has several other Quotations to the same import, as also *Vorstius* in his *Bilibra veritatis*.

But what do we say to the *Chaldee Paraphrase*, which often mentions the *Word of God*, and represents him as a *Person*? We say, perhaps it is not exactly known what Philosophical Notions *Onkelos* and *Jonathan* might have, who were the Authors of that Paraphrase; it may be they were *Platonists*, and accommodated some of *Plato's* expressions to the *Jewish* Sentiments; howbeit, we do not doubt but that all which they say of the *Word* is consistent with the *Unitarian* Sense, and we are certain that (as we have shewn) the *Body* of the *Jews* were *Unitarians*. The same Expression then, in an Author, may sometimes be taken in divers Significations. The *Word* of *God* may sometimes signify the *Message*, and sometimes the *Messenger of God*; sometimes the *Command* it self, and sometimes the *Person* that carries the *Divine Command* to *Men*; sometimes a *Divine Influence* or a *Divine Virtue*, the *Wisdom* and *Energy of God*, or his *Inspiration*, (figuratively represented as a *Person*) or his *Will* and *Decree*, and sometimes



a Creature in Office and Dignity, an Archangel, a Minister of God, or one who acts for God, and by God's Commission, and who in some measure represents him. By these Observations 'tis easy to explain in an Unitarian Sense all the Places, where the Chaldee Paraphraists mention *the Word of God*. Probably they thereby commonly understand, in speaking of God, the Wisdom of God attended and set forth with Command and Authority in acting, which Word or Authority God sometimes communicates in different manners or measures to some Creatures: And therefore sometimes by *the Word of God*, they understand a Creature; for instance, at the 1st. Verse of the 110th. Psalm they give that Name to Solomon, because the Kings of Israel were God's Deputies; and perhaps they interpreted that Verse, like some other Places, of the Messiah, to whom it is applicable, and who, as they expected, was to be a Temporal King of the House of David. No reason can be assigned, why they could not give that Title in that sense to the Messiah, (holding him only as a Creature) tho' sometimes they gave it to some of God's Attributes. Dr. Allix fancies that Philo actually personalized one of the Divin Attributes, namely, the Divin Wisdom, whom he called *the Word of God*. Yet, as we have before remark'd, the Dr. himself observ'd, that Philo calls also Angels in the Plural *the Words of God*. (Philo. De Migrat. Abrab. p. 415.) The same Title then may be given, both, to God, (or some Divin Influence or Divin Virtue,) and to some Creatures, who act for God, and who peculiarly represent him, and in and by whom he extraordinarily manifests his Wisdom and Authority. What belongs to God may be accommodated, or figuratively attributed, to such Creatures. And it is incontestable, that by *the Word*, in speaking of God, and by *the Divin Spirit*, or the Breath of his Mouth, may be meant the *Actions* or most eminent Manifestations of his Wisdom and Power.

As for such expressions as these in the Old Testament, *O God I have waited for thy Salvation*, when they are accommodated to the Messiah or the times of the Messiah, they may import no more than this, "O God I have waited for thy Succor, or the Deliverance of thy People from the Power of their Enemies, by the means of thy Victorious Messenger, the Great King of Israel." Howbeit, the Messiah, acting for God and being a King, might be called *God*, as well as Solomon, Ps. 45. and with much greater reason.

We cannot better conclude this Article than with two Observations in Dr. Bull's Book, *Judicium Ecclesie*. In the first Ages of Christianity, it was a great Controversy between some Christians and the Jews; whether the Messiah, according to the descriptions given of him in the Old Testament, is to be God, or a Man only? Those Christians believed, He is represented in the Old Testament, as God, or a God; the Jews, as a mere Man. *Judic. Eccl.* p. 15, 16. And at p. 21. the Dr. adds, Our Saviour puts this Question to the Pharisees; *Whose Son is Christ?* They answered, says the Text, *the Son of David*. But if Christ, says our Saviour again, is the Son of David; why then doth David call him Lord? The Evangelist remarks hereupon; *they were not able to answer him a word*. But had they known any thing of the Divinity of the Messiah, the Solution of the proposed Difficulty had been most easy and obvious to 'em. We may then conclude, the Jews believed only that the Christ was to be a Great King in this World, but not a Great King in the next, and much less did they imagin He should be God in a Superior Sense than *this*, whether in the Arian or Trithemistick Sense. So that the Generality

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rality of the *Jews* were as certainly *Unitarians*, as the Generality of the Heathens were *Polytheists*. And as for the Conceits of the objected Philosophers, we have seen that their Speculations are of as little Importance and Authority, as they are mysterious and uncertain, obscure and unintelligible.

( 2. ) *The Passages, in Pliny's Letter, and in the Dialogue intituled Philopatris, are incontestably invalid Arguments.* The Passage in Pliny's Letter, so much objected to the *Unitarians*, is, that, he says, Christians, in their Meetings, *Sang Hymns to Christ, ut Deo, as being a God.* To this the *Unitarians* give the following answers. First; it is probable that Passage is corrupted, and instead of *ut Deo* we should read *et Deo*; for so it was in the Copies in *Tertullian's* time. *Tertul. Apol. adv. Gentes. c. 3.* And then the Meaning being that Christians *Sang Hymns to Christ AND to God*, that is so far from implying that they held Christ to be God Almighty himself, that it shews the contrary, Christ being there distinguished from God. And his being joyned with God, in Hymns Sang to both their Praise, argues no more his being God himself, than it would argue that *Jael* is God, because she is blessed as well as God in the same Psalm of Praise. *Judg. 5. 2. Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel.* And at the 24th. Verse, *Blessed above Women shall Jael be. Deborah* also her self, the Composer of this Hymn, and *Barack, the Governors of Israel, and the Princes of Issachar* are praised at the 7th. 9th. 12th. and 15th. Verses. Thus in the 5th. Chapter of the *Revelations*, Men and Angels are represented Singing Hymns both to God and Christ, saying, " Blessing, Honor, Glory, and Power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Worthy is the Lamb, that was Slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honor and Glory, and Blessing. And the four and twenty Elders " said, Worthy is the Lamb, for he was Slain, and has redeemed us to God by his Blood, &c. " Which, by the way it may be observed, shews what incontestably Christians ought to do, viz: (tho' not to address direct and ultimate Prayers, yet) to Sing Hymns, in Honor, to Christ; which may be lookt upon as the true Interpretation of *Pf. 72. 15.* (Spiritually accommodated to Christ,) besides that there is no doubt but that the Angels and the Holy Spirits in Heaven may daily present Requests and Petitions to Christ, concerning particular Men and Churches; and when Christ is seen, he is to be addressed unto by Men, as their Saviour, and their Sovereign under God. Moreover, the generality of the *Unitarians*, ever held, that Christ is to be Worshipped, and Prayed to, as the Mediator of the New-Covenant, and the Vicegerent of the Universe, constantly assisted with the Divine Wisdom and Power, to the Glory of the Father, according to God's appointment.

Secondly; reading *Ut Deo*, that may signify, either *as being God, or as being a God, and as if he were God*, that is, *were held God, or a God.* If the former; that might be *Pliny's* own mistaken Conjecture, that because he understood Christians Sang Christ's Praises, he therefore imagin'd they took him for the Supreme God. But indeed 'tis most unlikely that this was *Pliny's* Meaning; for, being used himself according to the Heathen Rites to Sing Hymns to others besides the Supreme God or (suppos'd) Supreme Gods, it seems he could not upon this account conclude that Christians believed Christ to be God Almighty himself. It seems therefore he could only mean, that Christians Sang Hymns in Praise of Christ, as believing him to be A GOD. By which

which Phrase the Heathens themselves knew 'twas not necessary to understand the Supreme God. For as the Scripture calls some Creatures *Gods*, so the Heathens, tho' groundlessly, yet, often, gave that Title to several whom they knew and owned to be Created Beings. And in Chap. 2d. we have seen that Christians in those times made no difficulty to do the like, where (whether now right or wrong is another Question) they thought they had warrant from Scripture to give that Appellation to some glorified Creatures; and therefore there is no doubt but that, since many of them gave it to *Angels* in an inferior Sense, they much more gave it to *Christ*, the Sovereign of all *Angels* as well as *Men*, tho' they believed him to be but *such a dignified Creature*.

If *Pliny's* Meaning was, as 'tis not impossible but that the Expression may import, that Christians Sang to Christ, *as if he were held God, or a God*; that is quite contrary to what *Trinitarians* would have him to attest. For then 'tis as if he had said, that Christians Sang to Christ, *as if they had believed him to be God, or a God, which yet, according to this, it should seem, they believed not.* But most probably not this, but the foregoing, was *Pliny's* Sense, if we must read *UT Deo*, namely, *as to a God, or as to one whom they held for a God.*

As for the Dialogue intituled *Philopatris*, wherein mention is made of the God who is *Three and One, One and Three*; the best Criticks own it not to be a Dialogue of *Lucian's*, as the Translators themselves observe. We have many instances of several Treatises, joyned, either by chance or out of design, to some Authors Works, that yet belong not to that Author. It may then very well be, that that Dialogue is much later than *Lucian*. But if it were *Lucian's*, what could the *Trinitarians* infer from thence, but that there were then some Christians that believed a *Platonick Trinity*, and that *Lucian* was acquainted with some of them, or had confusedly heard of that strange Doctrin, and took occasion to mention it? Yet the original Meaning of that Mystery might be, that Christians looked on the *Son* and *Spirit* as Divine or most Sublime Persons next to God, and one or as one with God, being of the like Nature or of the like Affections with Him, and being, together with Him, above all Angels as well as above all Men, whereby, however, was constituted but one Divine Government, the Holy Scripture owning properly but one God, and the Primitive Christians so understanding it. Howbeit, 'tis reckoned that *Lucian* flourished about the middle of the Second Century. And the *Unitarians* own, that the *Evangelical Doctrin concerning the Divin Unity* was then begun to be corrupted. On the other hand, *Trinitarians* will not, cannot, deny, but that *Unitarianism* was professed at least by many Christians from the beginning of Christianity. Wherefore the *Trinitarian Plea of Antiquity* appears vain, unless it could be shewn that the *Unitarian Doctrin* was not allowed of in the earliest times of the Church, and was not the Sentiment of the Apostles themselves.

## C H A P. VI.

*A Continuation of the Answer, to the First Objection.*

( 3. ) **N**O very considerable Argument can be drawn out of the Antient Authors, because they were but few that wrote, and it was not impossible for them to deviate from the Simplicity of the Gospel. Therefore certainly it is a preposterous Way, to seek to be tried by the Writings of the Fathers. Good Christians, as *Origen* observes, (*Pref. Operis contra Cels.*) reckoned, in those Primitive times, that Christianity was better taught and defended by an innocent and exemplary Life, than by a multitude of Writings. Which shews, that they esteemed the essence of Christian Religion to consist, not in abstruse Notions, or strange Mysteries, and many Points of Speculation, but in plain Doctrines, (few in number, easy to be remembred, if Men would have been content with them, and worthy of all acceptation,) and in natural Precepts, agreeable to right Reason, approved to every Mans Conscience, and but a new Transcript and Confirmation of the Light of Nature. They were persuaded, that Sincere Repentance, according to the tenor of the Gospel, and Holy Living and the Habitual Practice of Vertue, proceeding from a Principle of Faith that God is, and that thro' Christ He will reward them that diligently seek him, and will render to all Men according to their Deeds, was the Way to Heaven and the Sum of Christianity. They thought it not necessary therefore to write many Books, looking upon Christianity but as Natural Religion revived and confirmed by Christ, or by God in and by the Ministry of Christ, with the addition only of the two Sacraments and Praying to God in the Name of Christ, as our Mediator and Intercessor; the Procurer and Chief Minister of the Covenant of Reconciliation, the Head of the Church, the Saviour of Men, and the Governor of the World, to whom all Power was given for the Administration of the Universe under God, and who is constantly assisted by the Spirit of God, which he has the privilege to communicate to his Disciples, as it is sufficiently declared in the Writings of the New Testament. Christian Religion, thus conceived and understood, is soon taught and learnt, and therefore needs not many Glosses and Comments, according to the Oracle in *Jeremiah*, 31. 34. And it seems the generality of the Primitive Christians had this Idea of Christianity, as may be shewn by the Relicks we have of them, or even by the Writings of their Successors tho' those went farther. \* There were therefore, after the inspir'd Writers, but very few (and most of those either too great Admirers of Human Learning or Fanciful Men) that then wrote, as appears from them that remain, and as cannot with any reason be denied.

(\* The same God, who gave the two Covenants, is He who gave Philosophy to the Greeks. Clem. Alex. Strom. L. 6. Our Faith is agreeable to the Common, Innate, Notions of all Mankind.

*Origen. Contr. Cels. L. 3. The Law of Nature is the Chief of all Laws. Id. Ib. L. 5. The Dispensation of the Gospel, is the Restoration of the Primitive Religion, which was in force before the Law of Moses. Euseb. Dem. Ev. L. 1. C. 6. The Religion which we now call Christian, is the same with that since the beginning. Aug. Retract. L. 1. The Sacrifices, that God requires of us, are an upright Heart, a pure Mind, and a clear Conscience.—These are our Sacrifices, these are our Mysteries, Min. Fel. Octav. See Dr. Cave's Primit. Christianity.)*

And it was not impossible for *such as these* to deviate from the *Simplicity of the Gospel*. The generality of the Primitive Christians were plain and illiterate Men, who contented themselves with the Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles, and stuck to them as their only Rule. These were not like to become Innovators. They studied only how to acquit themselves of their Duty, and prepare for Martyrdom, to which they were daily exposed. But when Learned and Fanciful Men embraced Christianity, especially those who had been Disciples to the *Heathen Philosophers*, they soon looked for new *Mysteries* in the Gospel, and supposed they made great Discoveries therein by the means of their *Philosophy*, which they always had in great esteem. They accommodated therefore as much they could the Expressions of the New Testament to their *Philosophical Systems*. And thus the *Mysteries of the Platonick Trinity*, were by degrees introduced among *Philosophizing Christians*. These are not bare Conjectures.

*Daleus*, in the 1st. Chapter of his 1st. Book *De usu Patrum*, gives a List of the few *Primitive Writers*, that we have, whose Works are *Genuine and Incontestable*: But, even making the Catalogue as it is commonly made, yet the generality of them, that were Heathenish Converts, prove to be *Philosophers*, that always retained a high veneration for their *Philosophy*. 'Tis well known, they were professed *Platonists* to the end, and therefore it is no wonder if in some measure they accommodated Christianity to the *Philosophy of Plato*.

*Justin Martyr* said, that the *Opinions of Plato* are not remote from those of *Jesus Christ*. And the same was affirmed by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, and the rest of the *Platonick Fathers*, who expounded the beginning of *St. John's Gospel* by *Plato's* most obscure Notions of his *Logos* or Second God. See *Le Clerc's Lives of Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Eusebius Bishop of Caesarea*, &c. p. 28. 29, 84. 85; &c.

Men that were such admirers of the *Heathenish Philosophy*, were easily disposed to think that *St. John's* Meaning was much the same with their *Philosophers* Sentiment, when they perceived some *Likeness* between their Terms. It is not at all strange therefore, if they introduced some change in the Christian Doctrine, especially considering that their Interpretations seemed to make for the Glory of Christ and the Honor of Christianity, which without doubt in its native Simplicity appeared to *Pagans* to be too mean, and too much destitute of *Sublime Mysteries*.

In Circumstances less favourable for Novelty than these, Alterations are soon made in Religion; witness the speedy Corruption of the Children of *Israel*, who, after a few days that *Moses* had been absent from them, and they being still under the conduct of his Brother *Aaron*, fell to *Idolatry*. Thus, as *Hegeffippus* testifies, the Apostles were no sooner departed, but manifold Errors mightily spread. (See *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. L. 3. C. 26.*)

What a weak thing then is it for the *Trinitarians*, to stop their ears to the Dictates of *Right Reason* and to several Texts of *Scripture* which are express against them, and to pretend that we ought to be determined by the *fanciful Writings of a few fallible Men*, most of whom came some considerable while after the Decease of the Apostles!

The Church of *England*, since the Reformation, has had several Learned Writers, and in these late times especially. If any of their Works remain a thousand Years



Years hence, we may (humanly) suppose, in case the Doctrines therein contain'd continue to be liked, it will be the Writings of *Pearson, Stillingsfleet, Cudworth, Tillotson, Burnet, Scot, Cave, Towerfon*, and some few others of the like kind. But what should we think of our Posterity, if they then pretended that the way to find out the Original Meaning of our Articles concerning Predestination and Free Will, would be to interpret them by the Sentiments laid down and established or intimated in most of these Great Men's Books?

Thus we have observed, that in the first three Centuries not only few Christians wrote in comparison of what they have done since, but it was not impossible even for them considerably to alter the Primitive Sentiments or the Doctrin of the Gospel.

(4.) Many excellent Works of the Primitive Writers have been suppressed and destroyed, which were most express for the Unitarian Sentiment. The Trinitarians themselves regret many of those Writings of the Primitive Christians of the first three Centuries, which appear to have been suppressed and destroyed. *Daleus*, in the first Chapter of his first Book *De usu Patrum*, acknowledges, that, tho' there were but few that then wrote, yet the greatest part of those few Writings have been lost, thro' the injury of Time, or the Fraud of Men, presuming that those Books were not to be preserved that were not altogether or near enough agreeable to their Sentiments. Such were, says he, the five Books of *Papianus* Bishop of *Hierapolis*, the Apology of *Quadratus*, the Apology of *Aristides*, the Works of *Castor Agrippa*, the five Books of *Hegesippus*, the Works of *Melito* Bishop of *Sardinia*, the Works of *Dionysius* of *Corinth*, of *Appollinaris* of *Hierapolis*, of *Pinyrus* the *Cretian*, of *Philippus*, *Musianus*, *Modestus*, *Bardesanes*, *Pantenus*, *Rhodo*, *Miltiades*, *Apollonius*, *Serapion*, *Bacchylus*, *Polyerates*, *Heraclius*, *Maximus*, *Hammonius*, *Trypho*, *Hippolitus*, *Julius*, *Africanus*, *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, and others.

If we had had left us such Writings as those of *Hegesippus*, or any Ecclesiastical History of some professed Unitarian, either senior or but contemporary to *Eusebius*, no doubt we should hear of several other Writers, who expressly taught Unitarianism, besides those mention'd by *Daleus*; like *Theodotion*, *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, *Paulus* Patriarch of *Antioch*, *Theodorus* of *Byzantium*, *Artemas*, *Apollonides*, *Hermophilus*, *Lucianus*, and others; seeing the Jewish Converts, as shall be shewn, appear for several Centuries to have been Unitarians, and it is credible not only that the Gentile Christians likewise were so originally, but also that the generality or greatest part of them continued such for some time, even when the Alterations began to be made, till the rigid Platonists made use of all manner of violence to extirpate the Truth.

Howbeit, the Criticks, who have written impartially concerning the Ante-nicene Fathers, are of opinion that the Writings of about 200 of them are lost, for about 20 others, some of whose Works have been preserved, we may say such as they are, tho', probably, not such altogether (as we shall observe) as they originally were. And they impute this Loss to the Errors, which they suppose were contain'd in those Books, and which the Trinitarian Party, when they were become the strongest and were thoroughly settled, thought fit to suppress as much as they could.

*H. Valesius*, in his first Note on *Euseb.* L. 5. C. 11. speaking of the Hypotypeses of *St. Clement*, (concerning which, *Photius* had observed that they are full of *Arianism*,

as that the Son is but a Creature, and such-like,) notes hereupon, that not only the Hypotyposes of Clement, but the Works of Hegesippus, Papias, and other Primitive (Ante-nicene) Fathers, were, for the Errors abounding therein, slighted, and lost. Which is in effect to say, that the too visible and express Agreement of the generality or greatest part of the most ancient Fathers and Doctors with the Unitarians, was the Cause that their Writings have been destroyed.

The Trinitarians cannot but know, that the Arians offer'd to be tried by the Tradition and Fathers of the first three Centuries, and that Athanasius declined it, as Bishop Taylor in particular confesses, in his Book, intituled, *The Liberty of Prophecy*, Sect. 5. Numb. 3. p. 85. 4to. (His Authorities may there be seen.) And in Chap. 7th. we shall see, from a Quotation out of Eusebius, that the other Unitarians appeal'd also to the Tradition of the first two Centuries.

Now doth n't it become Trinitarians well, to make a bustle about Antiquity, as if the Catholick Church in all Ages had unanimously been against the Unitarians.

The Unitarians indeed were at length overpower'd by the riotous, and violent, Platonick Christians, who at last did in a great measure Philosophize away Christianity. Yet there is not the least grounds to imagin, that the Writings of the Unitarians deserved to be slighted. For the Trinitarians themselves, that had seen their Books, own, that the Unitarians were Men of great and extraordinary Learning. See Euseb. Hist. Eccl. L. 5. C. 28. The World, no doubt, might now be experimentally convinced of it, as we before said, had we all the Writings of the ancient Fathers of the first and second Centuries, such as the Writings of Papias, the Book of Melito Bishop of Sardis intituled *Of the Creation and Birth of Christ*, the History of Hegesippus, and the Works of those other Doctors, some of whom we have seen named in the List which Daleus collected out of Eusebius and Tertullian and Jerom, and who in all probability were for the most part of the same Sentiment that Arius maintained afterward, by reason whereof 'tis likely, as was shewn, their Books were finally suppressed by the Nicene (Platonick) Trinitarians, and their followers, as no doubt it was begun by the other (violent and rigid) Platonists that were before the Council of Nice.

That Hegesippus was incontestably Unitarian, and what the Consequence of it is, see an English Pamphlet, intituled, *The Judgment of the Fathers concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity; Opposed to Dr. Bull's Defence of the Nicene Faith*, p. 41. 8cc. The only Objection is; that Eusebius doth not reprove Hegesippus for being an Unitarian. But it may be observed, that Eusebius, tho' he professed the Nicene Trinitarianism, was a Semi-Arian, and favoured the Arians; and perhaps he thought good to excuse Hegesippus, notwithstanding what he himself professed, as several learned Men in the Church of Rome defend Jansenius, at the same time that they openly abjure Jansenism.

( 5. ) Of the few remaining Writings, that are ascribed to the Fathers of the first three Centuries, 'tis very credible that some are Corrupted and some Supposititious. For instance, the Shepherd of Hermas and the Epistle of Barnabas, in Eusebius's time, were reckoned to be Supposititious. (Euseb. Hist. Eccl. L. 3. C. 25.) And Daleus has particularly contended, that the Epistles of Ignatius deserve no credit. Indeed those Sentiments have been thought by some (and in particular by the Socinians) to have been

been foisted therein, which the *Semi-Arian* Fathers did afterwards openly maintain: Yet some contend that those Writings expressly contain the same Doctrin that was originally Apostolical, and afterwards defended by *Arius* when it had been disguis'd by the *Platonists*. Howbeit, it is certain those that had either particular Opinions of their own, or particular interests to serve, made often no scruple to forge some Writings favouring them, which, in order to gain them the more credit, they ascribed to some Great Men. Several Apocryphal Books were put out under the Apostles's Names. How much more then, says *Daleus*, would they make bold with others? Nay, he observes that the Fathers themselves have been guilty of such Frauds. See the third Chap. of his first Book *De usu Patrum*.

And you need but read his following Chapter, to see that the genuine Writings of the Fathers have been corrupted. St. *Jerom* complains of the Impudence of Copists in corrupting of Books. (*Ep.* 28. *ad Lucin.* T. 1. p. 247.) And yet he owns, that himself, in translating *Origen*, omitted what was noxious or dangerous, that is, what suited not to his own Sentiments, and says that St. *Hilary* and others did the like. You may see the Quotations; and many more Allegations to the same purpose, in that Chapter of *Daleus*, where he quotes *Epiphanius* his Saying, that the Catholics scrupled not to correct or put out some things in the Scripture it self, fearing the use that the Hereticks might make of those Passages. *Daleus* determines not whether *Epiphanius* spake true or not herein, but he infers from thence that those ancient Catholics would have made no difficulty, to correct in like manner as much as they could the Writings of the Primitive Fathers, where they widely differ'd from the Sentiments that had prevail'd; and where those that were reckoned Hereticks might have found too undeniable Authorities for their Opinions. After this, can those be blamed, who will be determined by nothing but the Current of Scripture and the most incontestable Axioms of Reason?

Such Catholics as *Daleus* represents to us, we may think, made no great scruple to invent Stories that might favour them; or to give easily credit to such tho' upon the weakest Grounds; and to use such like shifts to defend what they took for Truth; Witness the Book of *Hermas*, and what *Jerom* owns of himself, and of the freedom he thought in such cases lawful to take. "A Man, says he, argues as he pleases. He may make a shew of presenting you with Bread, as says the Proverb, and all the while he may hold nothing but a Stone. He may say one thing, and think another. Consider the Arguments made use of by *Origenes*, *Methodius*, *Eusebius*, *Appollinaris*. They are often forced to alledge many things, which they did not believe, but which were necessary to support their Sentiments. I say nothing of the Latin Authors, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Minnicius*, *Victorinus*, *Lactantius*, *Hilary*, lest I should seem to accuse others rather than defend my self. (*Ep.* 50. *ad Pamm.* T. 2. p. 136.) When I write my Books, says he, I call for my Copist or Amanuensis, and I often dictate the thoughts of others that I have read, tho' I don't believe 'em my self, and sometime don't very well remember their Sense. (*Ep.* 89. *ad Aug.* T. 2. p. 304. and 525.)

After this, found your Faith, not on Scripture and Reason, but on a History concerning *Simon Magus* related in *Epiphanius*, or another concerning *Cerinthus* which *Irenaeus* had heard. Those Stories, or Traditions, after all, might be true, and not preju-

prejudice the Unitarians, as it might easily be shewn. For the Unitarians do not believe, as *Cerinthus* is reported to have done, that a Divin Person, and that distinct from the Father, dwelled in *Jesus*; Besides, he is said to have had many other grievous errors. If it were true therefore, that *St. John* would not be in the same Bath with him; what is that to the Unitarians? And if *Simon Magus* believed three Divin Manifestations, or Powers; why should it be thought that he believed nothing that is true? But if he asserted three distinct Divin Persons, as *Dr. Sherlock* thought must be inferred from *Epiphanius* his monstrous Story, that he pretended he was both the Father and the Son, and affirmed his lewd Woman *Helena* to be the Holy Ghost; why may we not think, he might be, among corrupted Christians, the first Founder of the Dr's Notion, or that which now passes for Orthodox, that is that of the Platonists and Realists? It may be, indeed, *Simon Magus* pretended that the Father and Son were manifested in and by him, &c. But if it be as *Dr. Sherlock* would have it, the Matter is of no importance to Us, but rather concerns the Platonick Trinitarians. For those ancient Fathers *Irenaeus* and *Eusebius*, who evidently incline more to the Unitarians than to the Scholastick Trinitarians, assert that *Simon Magus* was the Father and Author of all the Heresies, and particularly the Homousian. (See *Sandi. Nuel. L. 1. Secul. 2. De Gnostic. Iren. L. 1. C. 20. & 30. L. 4. C. 58. Euseb. H. E. L. 11. C. 13.*) Howbeit, pin who will, his Faith, on *Simon Magus*, or *Cerinthus* his Sleeve, who, if not misrepresented, were thoroughpac'd Platonists; or even Improvers of Platonism. Yet the Stories themselves, reported concerning their Heresies, may perhaps want a little Confirmation, considering the Humor of some of those times, as we have seen, and what *Eusebius* (*H. E. L. 1. C. 1.*) testifies, that he had a World to do to compile his History, finding so little Light in any Writing before him, the continual Persecutions having caused that Confusion as to the Ecclesiastical History, the generality of Christians contenting then themselves with the Writings of the New Testament.

*Daleus*, towards the beginning of the fourth Chap. of his said Book, seems to intimate, that we have nothing much to be relied on but the Holy Scripture; which, says he, has always been preserved with much greater care than other Writings; which all Nations have learned; which all Languages have translated; and which all Sects have retained, the Hereticks as well as the Orthodox, the Schismatics as well as the Catholics, the Greeks and Latins, Muscovites and Ethiopians, &c.

We may then conclude this Article, with this Reflection: It is altogether incredible that the Scripture has been materially corrupted; but it is highly probable that the Writings of the Doctors may have been considerably changed and altered.

## C H A P. VII.

### *A Further Continuation of the Answer to the First Objection.*

( 6. ) **H**owbeit, it still in a great measure appears, that the generality of the Primitive Christians were Unitarians, and even that the generality of the remaining Authors of the first three Centuries were far enough from being of that Opinion which is now called Orthodox, it being evident that they incline more to the Unitarian than to the present Trinitarian Sentiment. When the rigid Platonists were become for the most part the Masters and the Strongest, sometime before the Council of Nice as well as after it, they expressed a blind and furious Zeal for their new Notions, concerning the Son or Word, and shew'd as much as they could their ill will to the Ancient Christians the Unitarians, and to those Churches and Parties that retained the Primitive Doctrin of the Gospel. They, therefore, (and that was the least harm they did them) called them by several Nick-names, as Nazarens, Ebionites, Mineans, Alogi, and the like.

The Jews had begun in the Apostles's time to call the Christians, that were among them, Nazarens, and Mineans, (which last signifies Hereticks or Sectaries, and the other is a Denomination from Our Saviour whom the Unbelievers in derision called the Nazarene) as it appears, *Act. 24. 5. and 14.* The Jewish (and most ancient) Christians were also, as some think, called afterwards, by the Platonists, Ebionites, which signifies the Poor, either, as some pretend, from a Man named Ebion who (they say) was a great Defender of them, or because they were the ordinary and poorer sort of People who preserved the longest the Primitive Doctrin and could the most hardly be brought to relish the Notions of Platonism, or, as Eusebius asserts, because the Platonists accused them to have but poor and low Opinions of Christ. In fine, among the Gentile Converts, the Maintainers of the Primitive Doctrine were, by some, called Alogi or Alogians, as if they believed not Christ to be the Logos or the Word, because they believed not an eternal Word like Plato; and it is said, that some of these Gentile Christians received not at first the Gospel of St. John, as the generality of Christians admitted not presently some other Books of the New Testament, particularly St. John's Revelation, and the Epistle to the Hebrews which generally for 400 Years was not received as Canonical. It is too usual to go from one extremum to another; and it may be therefore that some of those Gentile Converts, who saw the absurdity of Plato's Polytheism and were told that Plato's and St. John's Expressions were the same and exactly agreed, imagined that this was a counterfeit Piece of the Platonists and Cerinthians, to uphold their Divin Hypostasis distinct from the Father, and so at first gave not themselves leave to consider and examin what might be the true Sense of St. John's terms and the Intention of his Gospel. Howbeit, the Platonists in process of time hated and defamed the Unitarians, not merely for what might have been amiss among some of them, but in general for their being Unitarian Christians. And, in that, they followed the Jews, who from the beginning persecuted the Christians, and gave them what reproachful Names they could, some of which always remained to the Jewish



*Jewish Converts*, that is to say, to those Christians who originally came from among the *Jews*, who were not generally vitiated by the Philosophy of *Plato*, and whom therefore, as we have said, the Platonists called by the same Names that the obdurate and unbelieving *Jews* had given them, namely, *Nazarens* and *Mineans*.

Now, it appears; that these *Nazarens*, *Mineans*, *Ebionites*, and the *Jewish Christians*, were taken to be much the same; and that they, and the *Alogi*, were *Unitarians*, were from the beginning, were most numerous, and continued a considerable Party for several Centuries, till they were in a great measure destroyed and extirpated by the most violent Persecutions of the Platonists.

*Origen* says, that all *Jews*, who own *Jesus* to be *Christ*, are called *Ebionites*. (*Contr. Cels.* L. 2. p. 56.)

*Theodoret* attests, that the *Nazarens* honour the Lord *Christ*, only as a Holy Man. (*Heret. Fab.* L. 2. C. 3.)

*Epiphanius* writes, that the *Nazarens* and *Ebionites* held the same Heresy. (*Heres.* 30. C. 2.) It is not impossible, but that *Epiphanius*, as well as *Origen*, and other Platonists, confounded with the *Ebionites* the other *Jewish Christians*, who generally did not platonize, but followed the true *Unitarian* System, whether we suppose it to be that which was maintain'd by *Arius*, or that which is now known under the Name of *Socinianism*.

*St. Jerom* acknowledges, that the *Jewish Mineans*, vulgarly called *Nazarens*, were to that Day over all Orient. (*Ep. ad August.*) There indeed was the Seat of the *Jewish Christians*.

And from the 24th. Chapter of the 3d. Book, and the 25th. of the fifth Book of *Eusebius* his *Ecclesiastical History*, it may further be gathered, that these as well as the *Gentile Unitarians* were the Successors of the Primitive and First Christians, and were defamed only by the Malice of the Platonists. Yet all this Evidence is from the Testimony of professed Enemies, there remaining now no other Authors, that expressly treat of these things.

As for the *Alogi*, their very Nick-name bespeaks them to be *Unitarians*. *Epiphanius* is the first, who gave to them the Name of *Alogi*. Before him, they were simply called Christians. *Epiphanius* speaks of them, as the ancient *Unitarians* of the *Gentile Converts*.

But we have, above all other Evidences, an express Testimony of the Faith of the Primitive Christians, in their Symbol, justly called the *Apostles Creed*, which manifestly is altogether *Unitarian*. For it is a Profession of Faith in one God, that is the Father Almighty. And every thing that is there said of the Lord *Jesus Christ*, is the Description, not of an eternal God, but of a Creature or Human Person highly exalted by God. And of the Holy Ghost no more is said, but that it is a Holy Spirit, or a Holy Breath or Holy Inspiration. The Compilers of the Creed pretended to know no more of it. And it is a Generality which the *Unitarians* highly approve of, but which hitherto the *Trinitarians* seem not to be pleased to stick to. If they were to make a Confession of their Faith, they would not express it as it is here; or, if they did, we would readily agree with them. To believe in, is a Phrase that signifies no more than to believe; for the Creed teaches us to believe in the Holy Catholic Church, as well as in the Holy Spirit and in one God the Father Almighty. As for the

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Antiquity and Authority of this Creed, we have the unanimous Opinion of the Fathers, as it appears in their Writings and as is observed by *Ruffinus* in particular who flourished in the Year 360, that it was compiled by the Colledge of the Apostles, with the Concurrence and Consent of the 120 Disciples, (mentioned in *Acts*, 1. 15.) who assisted them in their Councils. And it seems to be referred to, in *Rom.* 6. 17. *Rom.* 12. 6. 1 *Tim.* 6. 20. 2 *Tim.* 1. 13. *Jude.* 3.

In truth, the Divine Providence might well think it self not concerned, to preserve any other Evidence of the Authority and Antiquity of the Christian System, but this, besides the *Holy Scripture*.

Yet we have moreover the *Epistle of St. Clemens*, or *Clemens Romanus*, to the *Corinthians*. That is that *Clemens*, whom *St. Paul* not only calls his *Fellow-laborer*, but of whom he says that *his Name is written in the Book of Life*. *Phil.* 4. 3. This *Clemens*, being Bishop of *Rome*, wrote that *Epistle* to the Christians of *Corinth*, in the Name and by the Order of his Church. And this *Epistle* is so avowed a Piece of Antiquity, that the Trinitarians dare not disown it. Howbeit, the most learned Trinitarian Critics, such as Bishop *Usher*, *Petavius* and *Huetius* of late, and *Photius* of old, (see *Sandi. Hist. Secul.* 1.) acknowledge that *Clemens* appears therein an undoubted Unitarian; speaking of our Lord *Jesus Christ* just as the Unitarians do and no otherwise, as we see, for instance, even in these words of the 58th. Chapter, "God the Inspector of all things, the Father of Spirits, the Lord of all Flesh; who has chosen our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and us by him; grant to you Peace, Long Suffering, Patience, through our High Priest and Protector *Jesus Christ*: by whom be Glory and Honour and Majesty unto God, now and for evermore." Now let the Trinitarians seriously consider, whether they would thus express themselves, to teach what is to be believed, concerning God, the Father of all, and concerning our Lord *Jesus Christ*. (See *Sandius's Hist. Eccl.* for more express Evidences of *St. Clemens* his Unitarianism.)

There are also the *Recognitions*, which tho' perhaps by Mistake attributed to *St. Clemens*, yet are very antient, there being a Passage taken out of them in a Fragment of *Bardesanes*, preserved in *Eusebius* his *Præp. Evang. L. 6. C. 10.* They are so evidently agreeable to the Unitarian Sentiment, that they are confessed so to be by the Trinitarian Critics. For a further illustration of all these particulars, see the aforequoted Pamphlet, *The Judgment of the Fathers*, &c.

As for the other, remaining, *Ante-nicene Writings*; tho' they appear to begin to platonize, and proceed to do so more and more by steps, and some of them doing it in a pretty high degree, (those that asserted the rigid Unitarian Doctrine, or even that Sentiment that *Arius* afterwards was condemned for, thus being in time in some measure suppressed,) yet generally they are far from the Opinion that is now called Orthodox, and they incline more to the Unitarian System than to the Trinitarian Sentiment of the latter Ages.

For, first, they generally believe not the Holy Ghost to be God, or a God in an eminent sense like Him whom they call the God Word, or the Word whom God produced before all things, whom God was pleased to make a God or Sovereign next unto Him, and whom they suppose God employed, as his Minister in Creating the Holy Spirit and Angels, and as his Chief Officer in the Creation of all other things.

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Secondly, then, they by no means represent the Divine Word or Son as actually equal to God, but as an inferiour God, distinct from and subject to the *Principal God who has no God above him*; and they represent him not as a Necessary Being, that was generated from all eternity, but as being created of the Divine Substance, by the mere good Will and arbitrary Pleasure of God, immediately before the Creation of the World. Indeed they generally seem to make the Duration of Time to commence at the Creation of the World, and so suppose that what was done before the Creation of the Material World belongs not to the Duration of Time, but to the Duration of Eternity: Nevertheless, as was said, they hold not the Son to have been from all Eternity; for they assert that once he was not, and they hold that he had a beginning. Yet, according to them, he may be termed eternal, in that he existed in God from Eternity, and was produced in that Duration which was before the Creation of the World. In like manner, they reckon him to be equal to God, or (rather) like to God, no otherwise than as he is a most excellent Being that most eminently acts for and represents God and was created out of the Substance of God, whereas it seems they most generally hold that other Creatures were made out of Nothing.

They represent the Son to be created out of the Substance of God, as the Expression of our thoughts by Speech is created out of our Thoughts. But they offer their *Philosophical Speculations* for the most part as *Conjectures*, and not as *Articles of Faith*. Especially at first they were pretty sparing and moderate therein. Howbeit, the unfathomable Depths of *Platonism* (as it was taught in those Days, and which was then by too many philosophizing Christians imagined to be in a great measure reconcilable with Christianity and near the same thing with it) made that these poor Fathers, often, knew not well, themselves, or seemed not to know, what they said, nor whereof they affirmed. Yet, from the whole, it seems, it may be collected, that generally these *Platonists* inclined to that Opinion which afterwards was called *Semi-Arianism*. As was said, they generally own, that the Son was not from all Eternity, and that he is not Equal to the Father: Yet, the *Platonick Metaphysics*, which the *Heathenish* World at that time highly admired, as the sublimest Philosophy and the most rational Theology, and which these Doctors not only followed before they were Christians, but also, when converted, accommodated as much as they could to Christianity, it seems, at least, implying, that the Second Person of the Trinity was created out of the Substance of the First or Chief God, and the Third out of the Substance of the Second, yet so as that, tho' the Third Person of this Most High Trinity was not so Excellent as the Second, nor the Second but of an Inferior Divinity neither, howbeit bearing the Name of God, and therein particularly surpassing the Third Divine Person, these two Persons, nevertheless, (which, tho' Inferior to the Chief God, were Superior to all the other Gods, or Angels,) remained most intimately United, not only with one another, but also with the First Person of this transcendent Trinity, insomuch that these three, being thus United, and being of a like Substance, might be said to be one Thing, or as one Being; *Platonism*, I say, seeming at least to import somewhat like this, these *Platonizing* Fathers therefore by degrees philosophized among Christians much after that way, as much as can be conceived

ceived by their expressions. Indeed, all Creatures may be said in some sense to be united to God, and to be in God; for in him we live, and move, and have our Being. Nay, in some sense all Creatures may be said to have been in God from all Eternity, at least potentially, tho' not brought forth or produc'd from all Eternity, but only when Almighty God created this Universe. And even some of these Philosophers, and among them *Tertullian* particularly, expressly asserted, that mere Creatures, in particular Human Souls, were made out of the Substance of God. Howbeit, *Platonism* implying that the Son and the Spirit are above all other Creatures, the *Platonists* generally held that the Son at least or even the Son and the Spirit are most peculiarly of the Substance of God, were most peculiarly in him, and were most peculiarly united to him, so as that wherever the Son went, and whatever he did, God as it were had always a strict hold of him, and wrought with, in and by him. Nevertheless, as was said, they represented the Son and Spirit as Distinct and Inferior Beings, so that they own'd the Father to be properly the Supreme Being, and to be the only Person consequently that is properly God, or a God in the eminent Sense of the word. *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and, in a word, all the Primitive Doctors that were converted out of *Heathenism*, had been taught *Platonism*; and, when they were become Christians, they openly professed, in all their Writings, that they were still great admirers of that *Philosophy*, and they maintain'd that the *Christian Trinity* and *Plato's Trinity* was much the same. Thus they introduced *Platonism* in the *Christian System*, accommodating the one to the other as near as they could. *Justin Martyr*, it seems, particularly began openly to *Platonize*; and the rest followed after him. And then they for the most part represented the *Platonick Trinity* very like *Arianism*, any of 'em at most making it *Semi-Arianism*, & so, that the generality of Christians might, it seems, mistake it for *Arianism*, the good Fathers, either purposely or otherwise, expressing themselves very obscurely in a most Obscure Matter tho' some more *Platonically* than others. These, in comparison of those that followed, were *Moderate Platonists*, and scarce any or but few went further in the 2d. Century, or at least till towards the end of the 2d. Century, whereas afterwards, it seems, there arose among Christians several violent Opinionists and fierce *Semi-Arians*, and then many rigid, and thorow-paced, or very heathenish *Platonists*, true Polytheists, that perhaps went even farther than *Platonism* it self, and maintain'd much the same Notions, concerning the Son, that are laid down in Dr. *Sherlock's* Books. Not but that in the beginning of the 4th. Century, at the time of the Council of *Nice*, there were a great many of the most Learned Bishops that were still *Semi-Arians*, and several but *Arians*, most credibly according to the Doctrine that anciently was chiefly in vogue, before *Semi-Arianism* was establish'd by *Justin Martyr*.

The *Semi-Arians*, or Mildest *Platonists*, like the *Arians*, defended the Unity of God, by saying, that the Father only was the Supreme or Principal God, and that God the Word was not only Lesser than he, but also Subject to him; wherefore they concluded, it might truly be said, that, in Heaven and in the whole World, there is but One God-head, or but one God, tho' there be God the Father, and God the Son, as in a House where there is a Son Subject to his Father it may be said that there is but one Government, one Mastership or one Master, the one not being essentially different from the other when both of them perfectly agree. This is so well known to have been the sense of the generality of these *Ante-nicene* Fathers whole Writings have in some measure been preserved, as well as of many since, that it is needless to take much pains to



prove it. Howbeit, it will not be improper to give here some Instances of it. And, first, for the conveniency of some Readers, it may be useful to make these Chronological Remarks.

*Justin Martyr* flourished about the 130th. Year after Christ's Nativity.

*Hegesippus* and *Irenaeus*, about the Year 170.

*Victr*, Bishop of *Rome*, about the Year 190. And *Zepherin*, his Successor, about the Year 200.

*Tertullian*, about the Year 210.

*Origen*, about the Year 230. *Novatian*, and *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, within a few Years of that time.

*Arnobius*, whose Disciple was *Lactantius*, about the Year 295.

The famous Council of *Nice*, was held in the Year 325.

These few Observations sufficing for the Purpose in Hand, we may now proceed to aver what we have said concerning the Sentiment of the *Ante-nicene Platonists*; to which end we may consider these Passages out of the Writings of those of them who were most learned and esteem'd in their Generations.

*Daleus*, (towards the middle of the fifth Chap. of his first Book *De Us. Pat.*) nor distinguishing *Semi-Arianism* from *Arianism*, opines, that it is impossible to clear *St. Justin* from being an *Arian*, that Father asserting, "that the God, who appeared to *Moses* and the *Patriarchs*, was the Son and not the Father, inasmuch as the Father never changes Place, neither comes up nor down, and no Man therefore ever saw the Father, but the Son only has been seen, who is the Father's Minister, and a God also by the Father's Will." Now, says *Daleus*, is not this to attribute to God the Son a Nature and Being different from that of God the Father? Nay, he might have added, is not this also to ascribe to him an inferior and a precarious Being?

As the same *Justin Martyr* says to the same purpose in other Places; "God in the beginning, before all the Creatures, (that is to say before all the other Creatures, or mere Creatures, and immediately before the Creation of the World, for that is the strain of these *Platonists*.) generated of himself a certain Rational Power, one while called the Son, another while *Wisdom*, an *Angel*, *God*, *Lord* and *Word*. For he may be called by all these Names, both because he Ministreth to the Will of the Father, and was voluntarily Begotten of the Father. (*Colloq. cum. Tryph.* p. 221.)

"We account the Son in the Second Rank, and the Prophetick Spirit in the Third Order." (*Apol. 2. p. 47.*) At the 43d. Page of this Book, he puts the *Prophetick Spirit* in the same Classis with the good *Angels*, and indeed names him after them; which shews, that he took him to be one of them. We Honour the Father, and the Son, says he, and the Host of the other good *Angels*, who accompany and resemble him, together with the *Prophetick Spirit*. Which seems to be as if he had said, "We Honour also the good *Angels*, and in particular the *Prophetick Spirit*, who is one of them, and their Chief.

*Irenaeus* (who even was a Disciple of the Contemporaries of the Apostles, his Master *Polycarpus* having been a Disciple and Companion of *St. John*, and of some others that had seen the Lord, and who was, himself, as well as *Polycarpus*, generally in great esteem among Christians, tho' every one knows he was also a follower and great admirer of *Plato*) speaks much to the same purpose. The Church, says he, dispersed  
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thro' the whole World; has, both from the Apostles and their Disciples, received that Faith, which is in one God the Father Almighty; and in one Jesus Christ the Son of God, incarnated for our Salvation; and in one Holy Spirit, who by the Prophets published the Dispensations of God.——Jesus Christ is our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King, according to the good Pleasure of the Invisible Father. (advers. hæres. L. 1. C. 2.) He, who has no other God above him, is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ib. C. 19.) And in speaking of that Saying of Christ, that he knew not the Day and Hour of Judgment, he says; The Father is above all things; for the Father, says Christ, is greater than I: Wherefore in knowledge also, the Father is declared to have the Pre-eminence. (Ib. L. 2. C. 49.) The Apostles would not call any one of his own Person Lord, but him that exerciseth Lordship over all, even God the Father, and his Son, who has received from the Father the Lordship of all the Creation. (Ib. L. 3. C. 6.) The Apostles confessed the Father and Son to be God and Lord, but neither named any other God, nor confessed any other to be Lord. (Ib. C. 9.) I invoke thee, O Lord, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who art the only true God, above whom there is no other God, who rulest over all, and dost, in domination, besides our Lord Jesus Christ, rule also over the Holy Spirit. (Ib. C. 6.) By these Passages it appears, that Irenæus held the Father alone to be God in the most eminent sense of that word, and the Son to be Lord and God under the Father, but the Holy Spirit to be neither Lord nor God. Yet he might hold the Holy Spirit to be above the Angels, and 'tis probable he understood thereby what the Unitarians do. These Matters being left in a great Generality in Scripture, the Fathers explained them as they thought best. That liberty of inquiry and examination must be allowed of, so those explications and interpretations be but offer'd as Opinions and Conjectures, but be not Magisterially imposed by any Man on other Men. For, to follow the Design and Intention of Scripture, Christians must Unite in the Generality of the Terms of Scripture, as we see it in the Apostles Creed. If these Measures had always been observed, Platonism had done but little harm. It seems that Platonism made the Platonizing Fathers differ from the strict Unitarians, and Arians, I mean, the Ancient and Primitive Christians that held the Sentiment that *Arim* revived or improved. For it seems he believed, after them, that the Word, like other Creatures, was made out of Nothing. But, it seems, *Plaro*, as after him his Christian Disciples, (of the Number of whom *Irenæus* seems to be,) taught that the Word was created out of the Substance of God.

*Daleau* observes, in the last quoted Place of his aforesaid Book, that *Tertullian* (tho' the most thorow-stitcht Platonist of his time) had much the same Thoughts, and held, that God the Father produced the Word out of himself and made him his Son, but that the Father is the whole Substance and the Son a Portion and Derivation of that whole.

In another Place, the same *Tertullian* says expressly, that there was a time when the Son was not, (*Adv. Hermogen. C. 3.*) and it seems that by the Holy Spirit he means only the Vertue and Power of God: (*De Præscript. C. 13.*)

*Nevatian* says, that the Holy Spirit is less than Christ, (*De Trin. C. 24.*) moreover that once the Son was not, and that before him was nothing besides the Father. (*C. 11.*) Whereby he positively asserts, that the Father alone is from all Eternity, and consequently that the Father alone is God in the eminent Sense of that word. Which is very different from the Sentiment of the rigid Platonists and the present

present *Trinitarians*, who hold the Son and Holy Spirit to be from all Eternity as well as the Father, and to be equal among themselves and co-equal with him, as it is in the Creed of *Athanasius*. Now those that do not assert the Son and Spirit to be eternal, and consequently not to have a necessary Existence, nor unlimited Perfections, nor unborrowed Powers, or Powers that they have not received freely from another, may very well pass for *Unitarians*; seeing they make not the Son and Spirit to be God like the Father, but the Father's Creatures.

*Dalau*, in the Place we last quoted, remarks that those expressions, which afterwards were so much found fault with in *Arius*, were used by these *Antenicene*: he mentions *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, who expressly calls the Son *the Father's Workmanship*, which is the same as to say, *the Father's Creature*. They expressly say, that the Father Made the Son, and they even use the very term that the Father Created him. Nay, *Dalau*, in the same Place, forgets not to take notice, that the 80 *Platonick Bishops*, who, at the latter end of the 3d. Century, (so violently) condemned the famous Patriarch of *Antioch*, yet at the same time did expressly declare, *that the Son is not of the same Essence with the Father*. Now therefore, by the Acknowledgement of the *Trinitarians* themselves, the *Post-Nicene Trinitarians* cannot with any Modesty pretend, that the *Ancients* were of the same Opinion with them; and consequently there can be nothing more vain, than for them to plead *Antiquity*.

*Origen*, like the foregoing Authors, not only called the Son a Second God, (*Conr. Cel. L. 5. p. 253.*) but a Creature, and the oldest of the Creatures. (*Ib. p. 257.*) And in his First and Second Books concerning Prayer, he has so many Arguments against Praying to any but the Father, and so blames those that would also direct their Prayers to the Son, plainly calling them *Fools* for so doing, that it clearly appears, that, according to him, the Supreme or true Divinity belong'd to the Father only. This is so notorious, that many have believed, that *Origen* was of the same Opinion that *Arius* afterwards was of; and *Epiphanius* did well observe, that in many Places *Origen* makes the Son and Holy Spirit to be of another kind of God-head, or of another Nature and Essence, than that of the Father. (*Epiphan. adv. Her. L. 2. T. 1. p. 531.*) Now, since so antient, so renowned and learned a Doctor, as *Origen*, was of this Sentiment, that alone is a sufficient Argument, that the Notion of the present *Trinitarians* was not then known to be the Apostolick Doctrine, that at least the Tradition about that Point is uncertain, and consequently that the Determination thereof ought not to be sought for by this Means. Indeed, in reason, so *Abstruse* and *Intricate* a Matter ought to be *Magisterially* determined by no Means, if they are not attended with greater evidence; but every one must be allowed to judge the best he can for himself, and Men must Unite in the use of the terms, and expressions, themselves, of Scripture, if they appear to be susceptible of a great Generality, and perhaps designedly indeterminable, and if there lie invincible Difficulties, and unanswerable Arguments, not to say Demonstrations, against the (*Platonick*) *Trinitarian* System. Howbeit, as we shall further see, the Scripture must be own'd to be the only Rule herein to be sought to, besides the clear and incontestable Dictates of Reason; and the *Trinitarians*, if they be sincere, must acknowledge, that their Plea of *Antiquity* is vain and frivolous. None but Quacks can talk at Dr. *Sherlock's* rate, that the whole Catholic Church in all Ages has been of his Sentiment, or of the Sentiment of the

the present *Trinitarians*; and that the *Unitarian* Controversy may be decided by the Judgment of the ancient (*Ante-nicene*) Authors, whose Writings have in part been suffered to come to our Hands. It appears evidently, that the *Ante-nicene* were not of the Opinion that is now termed Orthodox. To evince which Position of ours, it is indeed superfluous to add many more Proofs, after what we have alleged out of these most ancient and famous Authors. I shall therefore only add two or three Passages out of the following Writers, which, tho' not altogether so ancient as the foregoing, yet come not so much short of it as to deserve to be wholly unregarded. They were very eminent and learned Men. It cannot be doubted but that they knew what Doctrine, in, as well as sometime before, their time, was held as Orthodox, and was requir'd in that rigorous Age to be held as such. And it is credible they would not have publicly asserted any thing in these Matters, that would then have drawn upon them the Censures of the Church, in the Communion of which they flourished, and in which they were desirous to be in great esteem. Nevertheless, it doth appear, their Opinion, as well as that of the afore-quoted Authors, is very different from that of the present *Platonick* or *Scholastick* *Trinitarians*. For instance, then.

*Arnobius* declared, in the Treatise he wrote to inform the Gentiles with the Truths of Christianity, that Christians did indeed hold Christ to be a God, but inferior to the Father, and a lesser God than He who alone is the Almighty God. Christ, says he, is a God, who, in the form of a Man, spake to the World, by the Command of the Principal God. (*Adv. Gent. L. 2. p. 106.*) The Almighty God, who is the only God, at length sent out Christ. (*Ib. p. 120.*) How could he have taught more plainly, or more expressly, that the Father alone is the Almighty God, and the only God, or the only Person that is God in the eminent sense of that word? Not but that he might hold both Christ and the Holy Spirit to be also Divine Persons. But 'tis evident he reckons them to be of an inferior kind, seeing he denies them to be the Almighty, the Principal and Only God. He makes them therefore Creatures, tho' created Gods, whether or no created out of the very Substance of the Almighty God. He comes then very near to *Arianism*, if he be not altogether *Arian*. He looks upon the Almighty Father, as the only Fountain of all Being and Perfection, and as able, not only to produce other Beings, but to communicate to whom he will immense or vast Perfections and a Divine Nature, tho' inferior to his, because there can be but one Infinite and Almighty Being: Wherefore all Creatures, tho' never so Divine and Excellent, can have but limited Perfections, and must ever remain subject to the Almighty? Now who doth not see, that this is to assert but one God properly so called, or but one who is the Almighty God, the Principal or Supreme God, and the Only God? And is not that *Unitarianism*?

Besides, tho' *Justin Martyr* said; that in the 2d. Century the Holy Angels were worshipped (particularly,\* it may be, by some Platonists) *Arnobius* declares that in his time Christians thought it sufficient to worship God, even God the Father, the Principal God. Howbeit, says he, to discharge the Worship of Divinity, the Chief God is sufficient for us: (I say) the Chief God, the Father and Lord of all Things. In him we worship whatsoever is to be worshipped. For we have in him the very Head of Divinity, from whence the Divinity of all Divine Things whatsoever is derived. If the *Platonick* *Trinitarians* had always kept strictly to this Generality in their Terms of Communion, there needed have been no Disagreement nor Division. It.

It is evident that in the second and third Centuries, after that *Justin Martyr* and the other converted Philosophers had introduced their Platonism in the Christian Religion, the Primitive Unitarians were indeed commonly vilified and opposed, but yet the Platonists kept not all alike at the same distance from these, but somewhat differed among themselves, and allowed of that difference; not being then agreed how much justly of Platonism was to be admitted or held necessary, nor knowing how to determine a Matter that seemed so obscure and abstruse. The Nature of the H. Ghost especially was then left undetermined. The generality not only of the old Christians, but even of the new Platonick Doctors, own'd him to be but the Power and Inspiration of God, or else took him for an Archangel, and a created Spirit like the other Angels, but above all the Angels. And therefore if there were at those times any rigid Platonists that had much the same Notion that the present Trinitarians have of the H. Spirit, they contented themselves covertly or modestly to assert or intimate their Opinion, but durst not and could not attempt imperiously to condemn those that were not of their Sentiment. We see, the generality of the *Ante-nicene* agree, that the H. Ghost is not God, tho' some call him a Divine Person, but none of them would have made difficulty so to have called any Angel; those that called him the Power of God, as *Irenaeus* and others, yet expressly affirmed that he was not God, and so it seems took him not to be a real Divine Person, or a real Divine Being, but an Act, or an Influence and Inspiration of the the Divin Power, or an Archangel, or both, or they knew not what. And those that positively called him a Creature, were not censured even by the highest Platonists of those times. And as touching the Nature of the Son or Word of God, it seems that then *Semi-Arianism* did most prevail among the Doctors, even perhaps from the 2d. Century; but yet till the Council of *Nice* the (suppos'd) ancient Doctrin afterwards called *Arianism* was allowed of in the Church, at least in a great measure, and generally for a good while approved before. For most probably many of those ancient Writings, that were suppressed after the Council of *Nice*, (as containing a Doctrin that was then in a great measure grown out of Date, tho' the avowed Works of the most excellent & learned Bishops of the Church) asserted the Scriptural Sentiment for (it seems) at least the like to which *Arius* was condemn'd at *Nice*. And we see that several of those *Ante-nicene*, that have been permitted to come to our hands, so express themselves that they may be taken for *Arians*. Howbeit, it suffices us if they generally appear to be but *Semi-Arians*. For then it is evident the present Trinitarians cannot justly plead *Antiquity*.

The celebrated Writings of *Lactantius* are a further Testimony to what I have said, concerning the State of the Platonick Trinitarianism in the Church before the Council of *Nice*. He asserts, that God, before he set upon this ourious Work of the World, begat an incorruptible and irreproveable Spirit, that he might call him his Son. Altho' God produced, also, for his Service, infinite others, whom we call Angels; yet he has vouchsafed to give the Name of Son but to his First-born. (Instit. L. 4. C. 6.) And because the Son was faithful to God, and taught Mankind that there is one God, and that he alone is to be worshipped, neither did ever call himself a God, because he had not discharged his Trust; therefore he received the Dignity of a Perpetual Priest, and the Honor of a Sovereign King, and the Power of a Judge, and the Name of God. (Ib. C. 13.) Now when any one has a Son, whom he entirely loves, who notwithstanding dwells in the House, and under the Governing Power of his Father, altho' the Father grants him  
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the Name and Authority of a Master ; yet, in the terms of Civilians, here is but one House, and one Master. So this World is but one House belonging to God ; and the Son and the Father who inhabit the World, and who are of one Mind, (or of like Affections and perfectly agree,) are as One Government or One only God ; the One being as the Two, and the Two as the One. And no marvel, since the Son is in the Father, because the Father loveth the Son, and the Father is in the Son, by reason of his faithful Resignation to his Fathers Will, and that he does nothing but what the Father Commands him. This evidently declares in what sense the Father and Son are to be understood to be One God or One Mind and One Spirit, Namely, inasmuch as they are of one Mind, they are therefore as if they were but one Spirit, or but one Person and one God. Yet, according to this, they really are Two distinct Beings, and Two very unequal Spirits. For the Son has freely received all from the Father, and is ever Inferior and Subject to the Father, and was produced then when God was going to set himself upon the Creating of the World, and consequently is not from all Eternity. The Father then is the First and Principal God ; and the Son is a God of a lower kind. If this be not pure *Arianism*, as it may be taken and seems to be, all that it can amount to is at most *Semi-Arianism*, which indeed very little differs from *Arianism*, for both Systems hold the Son to be God but in an Inferior sense, and assert the Father alone to be the one only true God, tho' the *Semi-Arians* esteem that the Son was Created out of the Fathers Nature or Substance, whereas *Arius* and those that are exactly of his Opinion, as was said, conceive that the Son, tho' immediately produced by the Father, was Created out of Nothing, and only differs from other Creatures, in that he is more Excellent than they all put together, was Created by the Father alone, and is set by the Father over all created Beings.

As concerning the Person and Nature of the Holy Spirit, *Daleus*, in the Fourth Chap. of his Second Book *De usu Patrum*, remarks, after *St. Jerom*, that *Laſtantiuſ* expressly asserts the Holy Ghost to be but a Creature and not to partake of the Deity. (*Sandius* brings many Instances, to prove that both *Laſtantiuſ* and all the other fore-mention'd Authors were even of *Arius* his Sentiment, and not they only, but also generally the remaining *Ante-nicene* Writers.)

All these Authors, which we have quoted, were undoubtedly most learned and deservedly esteem'd in their Generations, and are now generally esteem'd still by all Christians, and indeed they may be accounted the Chief of the *Ante-nicene* whose Writings have been preserved : (We may also rank among them *Eusebius* Bishop of *Cæsarea*, as well as *Laſtantiuſ*, since he flourished sometime before, as well as since, the Council of *Nice*, and appears to follow wholly the Sentiments of *Justin Martyr*, when not aw'd by the *Nicene* Tyranny ;) so that the then current *Ante-nicene* Doctrine may be known in these Writings.

Concerning these Matters, (therefore,) we may remark, *Eusebius* expresses himself to this purpose. He that is beyond all things, the God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the Governor of all things, how many, and of what quality soever they be, even of the Holy Spirit himself, yea further of the Only Begotten Son also, is deservedly styled by the Apostle the God that is over all, and he only may be called the one God, the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ* : But the Son is the Only Begotten God, who is in the Bosom of the Father : And the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, is neither God, nor Son ; for he has not received his Production from the Father like the Son, but is one of those things which were made by the Son. (De Ecclesiast. Theol. L. 3. C. 6.) If John had conceived the Father



and the Son to be one and the same thing, he would have said, that the Word was the God, with the Addition of the Article; which not doing, he evidently teaches us, that he is the Prime God who is the Father of the Word, and that the Word was not that very God, but yet that he also was a God. (Ib. L. 2. C. 17.)

This is the Current Doctrin of the Old *Ante-nicene* Platonists concerning the Son and Holy Ghost. *Eusebius*, like the other before him, expressly asserts that the Holy Ghost is not God; and it is visible, he says no more of the Son than at most what is agreeable to *Semi-Arianism*. That was, it seems, what the generality of the Primitive or Ancient *Ante-nicene* Platonists meant by the Divinity of the Word, and for the not coming up to which they opposed the *Ebionite* and the *Nazarene Unitarians*. *Eusebius*, in the 25th. and last Chap. of the 5th. Book of his History, quotes a remarkable Passage of an Author (a Platonizing Christian) who had written upon that account against the most rigid Unitarians. The Passage is to this effect.

"The Unitarians pretend, that the Apostles and all the Ancients held the very Doctrin, concerning the Person of our Saviour, that is now maintained by the Unitarians; and that it is but only since the Times of the Popes *Viſtor* and *Zepherin*, that the Truth has been adulterated and discountenanced. This would be credible, if, first, the Unitarian Doctrin were not contrary to Holy Scripture; and if divers before *Viſtor* and *Zepherin* had not contended for the Divinity of the Lord Christ, Namely, *Iustin Martyr*, *Miltiades*, *Tatianus*, *Clemens of Alexandria*, *Irenæus*, *Melito*. To whom we may add the ancient Hymns or Psalms, wrote from the beginning by the Brethren; which speak of Christ as the Word of God, and attribute to him Divinity.

Upon this Famous Passage, these Remarks may be made. 1. Whereas these Ancient (rigid) Unitarians said, that the Primitive Doctrin was adulterated in the Times of *Viſtor*, their Meaning without doubt was not that before him there was never a Platonick Christian, but only that the Platonick Christians then prevailed, and grew violent and began to discountenance the Truth.

2. All those Writers, whom this Author, or Answerer, and Antagonist of the rigid Unitarians, mentions as the Ancientest Assertors of the Divinity of the Word after the Platonick System, were, except *Iustin*, but Contemporaries to *Viſtor* and *Zepherin*, or after them. (As for those Hymns which he speaks of, we shall see that no stress can be laid on them, or that they conclude nothing against the Unitarians.) Hereby then the Novelty of the Platonick Christianity appears, seeing no vouchers for it can be produced before *Iustin Martyr*; and it is therefore evident that what the Unitarians said could not be disproved, that the Times of *Viſtor* and *Zepherin* were the Fatal Epoche of the violent Opposition and Oppression of Unitarianism, seeing that the Crowd of fierce Antagonists then began, and it cannot be shewn, that the Unitarian Doctrin was before then persecuted and discountenanced, or that it was not, during all the first Century, the current Doctrin of the generality of Christians.

3. It is probable that some of the Writers whom that Author opposes to the Unitarians, were but of that Sentiment which was afterwards so unjustly condemned in *Arius*: Why else had their Writings been suppressed by the Platonists? Perhaps, also, by the Word and the Spirit they understood two Divine Powers, or Influences, which God communicates in divers manners and degrees. It was easy for the philosophizing Doctors, following *Plato's* Notions and accommodating them to the Expressions of Scrip-

Scripture, by those two Powers or Influences to understand so many Persons or Hypotheses, and so to alter insensibly the Primitive Doctrine; which if they had not done, they would not have suppressed the Writings of their Predecessors, but they judg'd that to be the only way effectually to compass their design.

4. As to those Hymns or Psalms in question, which, he says, spake of Christ as the Word of God, and which attributed to him Divinity, nothing can from thence be concluded against the Unitarians, for the following reasons. First, taking those terms in a right sense, the Unitarians will by no means deny that Christ is the Word of God, and that Divinity may be attributed to him. We have seen that very eminent Doctors among the Primitive Christians called the Angels Gods; much more then might they give that Name to Christ. It would indeed have been something to the purpose, if that Author could have pleaded, that those Psalms, of which he speaks, ascribed to Christ the same or an equal Divinity with that of the Father, or expressed that he was absolutely Eternal, and of himself Omniscient, like the Father. But merely in general their attributing Divinity to Christ, decides nothing, not only considering the improper way of speaking of those (tho' so early) Times after the Apostles, but also considering that the Scripture gives the Name of God to some Creatures. And in Ch. 5th. we observed, the Unitarians ever thought it their Duty to Sing Hymns in Honour to Christ. Howbeit, Secondly, that Author produces no grounds for the Authority of those Psalms which he mentions. He only affirms that they were wrote from the beginning by the Brethren; but that is precariously said, without any Proofs. If he had had any evidence for his assertion, no doubt he would have offered it, and would, thereby, (if that could have done it,) have convinced or confounded the Unitarians. But surely it was not fit for them to take things upon trust. Satan, then chiefly, made it his particular business, by his emissaries, to bring in what confusion he could by forged Writings. If those Psalms had not been spurious and counterfeit, the Authors or Primitive Abettors of them had been named. It is probable that these were the Psalms that were censured by the Church of Antioch, as new and dangerous. See Eusebius's Eccles. Hist. L. 7. C. 29.

5. The Assertion of the Unitarians, that Victor and Zepherin were the first Oppressors of Unitarianism, is undeniably confirm'd by this consideration, that the Platonists, before those Popes, looked even on the most rigid sorts of Unitarians as their Brethren, suffered those among them, and owned them as Christians, who not only believed Christ not to have pre-existed before his Conception in his Mothers Womb, but who also held that he was a mere Man, begotten like other Men, and that Joseph was truly his Father, God, as they thought, having only removed, for that once, some Obstacles which hindered the Virgin from being a Mother. Notwithstanding the reputed grossness of this Error, we see that Justin Martyr, the Patriarch of the Platonists, acknowledges that it is not destructive of Christianity. For he thus argues with Trypho the Jew. If I do not demonstrate that Jesus did pre-exist, and according to the Counsel of the Father endured to be Born a Man of like Affections with us, being endued with Flesh, it is just and fit to say that I am mistaken in this only, and not to deny that he is the Christ, if he appear to be a Man born of Men, and to have become the Christ by Election. For there are some of our kind, who confess him to be the Christ, yet hold him to be a Man born of Men. To whom I assent not; no, not tho' very many of the same Opinion with me should speak it, &c. (Col. cum Tryphon, Jud. P. 207.) One may

perceive how wary or artificial *Justin* here is in his Expressions, as if most Christians in his time were already Platonists. It is credible that they were not the greatest number who held that *Jesus* was *Joseph's* Son; 'tis certain many of the *Ebionites* were of another Opinion; (*Euseb. L. 3. C. 24.*) most probably, the generality of Christians believed, like our *Socinians* and the rest of the present Christians, that Christ had no other Father but God; and if that was the Apostles Sentiment which *Arius* afterwards defended, at least we may imagin that it did then still prevail with many. But *Justin*, as we have seen, seems to have held something more than this, tho' very different from the *Nicene*, or *Post-Nicene* Platonists; and it is not impossible, not only that his Sentiment was confounded (or generally taken for much the same) with that which afterwards *Arius* was of, the which it is credible was then (in *Justin's* time) the most current Standard of Orthodoxy, but also that several others Platonized then like him, a little above *Arianism*. Nevertheless *Justin* dares not be too positive for his Opinion, he proposes it only as probable, and he insinuates that very many were not of his Sentiment; which, one would be apt to think, implies that most Christians differed from him, or that he somewhat differed from them, for it seems he speaks like one whose Party is not most prevailing. We may refer it to the present *Trinitarians*; whether they do talk at that rate? He owns, not merely the *Arians*, but the very *Mineans*, for his Fellow Christians. And indeed he doth, like those who complain that their Sentiment is not generally followed; he appeals to the Rule: To whom, says he, I assent not; tho' very many should speak it; for we are commanded, by Christ himself, not to hearken to the Doctrines of Men, but to such things as are taught by the Sacred Writers. Yet, as I have said, probably there were still many *Arians*, and I do also believe several others besides *Justin* probably began then with him to Platonize; but it is not doubted but that he was the highest Christian Platonist of that time, if he went beyond *Arianism*, which even some take to be *Platonism*, and the top of it; but that is commonly rejected as undervaluing the Platonick Mysteries: Howbeit, there is not the least appearance that any Platonick Christians went then any further than what we call *Semi-Arianism*. It cannot be but that the *Unitarians* knew and own'd that *Justin* and some others then were of that Opinion, if it was indeed so. And truly it matters not how many then sided therein with *Justin*. For, howsoever that be, it suffices us that the strictest *Unitarianism* was not then condemned, as intolerable in the Church, or as inconsistent with Christianity. And that appears incontestably from *Justin's* Words. Therefore the *Unitarians* might well say, that the Truth was not yet publicly adulterated, in that it was not yet magisterially condemned, which we do not see it was before the (prevailing, and violent, *Semi-Arian*) Popes *Victor* and *Zepherin*, according to the Plea of the *Unitarians*. And indeed they might have added, that the *Semi-Arians* themselves were but a kind of *Unitarians*.

All the Authority, then, in fine, that remains for our Author to have recourse to, is that of the *Holy Scripture*. And there the *Unitarians* are ready to join issue with him, as shall be shewn.

It were now needless to add any thing more to what has here been said, to shew that the generality of the *Ante-nicene* Writers (as much as may be gathered by the Writings of them, that have been thought fit to be preserved or that have been permitted to come to our hands) were at most but *Semi-Arians*, if not *Arians*, or stricter *Unitarians*, as incontestably many of them were. (*Eusebius* himself will generally pass for a kind of *Unitarian*, whatever be said or pretended to the contrary.) If the

the Reader desires to see further Proofs of these Points, I refer him to *Gilbert Clerk's Ante-Nicenisms*, and the two other Tracts annexed to it. But this truth is so notorious, that it even forces an acknowledgement from the generality of the learnedest *Trinitarian Criticks*, such as *Erasmus, Daleus, Petavius, Huetius, &c.*

These Learned Men manifestly shew, that *Arius* was not the Author of the Sentiment which he defended against *Alexander* and his Party at the Council of *Nice*, but that it was much the same, or exactly the same, with what the generality of the *Ante-nicene* Doctors had taught. See, for instance, what *Sandius*, in his *Nucleus* or *Hist. Eccl. enucleata*, quotes, on that Subject, out of *Petavius*; the Place may be found, in looking, *Petavius*, in the *Index*. So that it is certainly a true remark, that when *Alexander* and some of the *Nicene* and *Post-Nicene* Doctors call *Arianism* an unheard of or new Doctrin, they speak it oratorio more et per exaggerationem, as *Petavius* expresses it, that is, by way of exaggeration and after the manner of Orators, whose Figures by being too lofty sometimes decline from the Truth. We have seen, in our 6th. Chapter, by a Quotation of *Daleus* out of *St. Jerom*, that the good Fathers, who are so much admir'd, and whom some would take for their Rule, were not wholly exempt from such Figures. And therefore that they might call *Arianism* a new and strange Doctrin, it was enough that themselves and some of their Party had been taught *Semi-Arianism*, or one Step farther, by their *Platonick* Tutors.

It appears then, that, if we will follow in this Matter *Vincentius Lirinensis* his Rule, we must be content to stick to the Generality of the Apostles Creed. For, besides the Generality of the Scripture it self, the Apostles Creed (which incontestably was given for the Rule of Union, as well as for the Summary of Religion which every one is oblig'd to endeavour to understand aright to the best of his Power as he shall answer it to God) is, as to these Matters, the only Standard which all Christians have always agreed in. As *Bishop Taylor* observes, in his 2d. Sermon, on *Tir. 2. 7.* "The Catholick Church has been too much and too soon divided. — Yet in things simply Necessary God has preserved us still unbroken. For all Nations and all Ages have received the Apostles Creed." All Christian People, then, in all Ages, having only agreed, as I said, in the Generality (or the Expressions themselves) of the Apostles Creed; that must needs therefore be sufficient; if God has preserv'd us unbroken in things simply Necessary, or if nothing is to be judg'd absolutely Necessary but what all have always agreed in. *Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus.* Is it not indeed sufficient, to the great Purposes of Christian Religion; to know, concerning God, that He is All-Wise, All-Just, All-Good, Almighty; to know, that Christ is his Son, and the H. Ghost his Spirit, by way of eminency; and to know, that Christ died to Redeem us and turn us away from our Sins, that it is the H. Spirit of God that Suggests good Motions to us, that all these Societies where the Institutions of Christ are observ'd and celebrated, and where the pure Word of God is Preach'd, are true Parts of the Universal Church, that we shall all Rise from the Dead, and that God will reward all Men according to their Works? Is not this, to know God, and Christ? And have all Christians always agreed in the Super-induced Platonism? Even *Monfieur Jurieu* owns, (and indeed who can deny it, that will deal sincerely, and has inquir'd into the Matter?) that the *Ante-nicene* Fathers held not the Son's Eternal Personality, nor his Equality to the Father. (Lest. Pastor. Vol. 3. Let. 6.) After-Ages then, which broached these Tenets, can no more plead Tradition, than they can reasonably be suppos'd to have infallibly mended the Primitive Faith. And this leads us to the next thing to be spoken to.



*The Conclusion of the Answer, to the First Objection.*

( 7. ) **T**HE prevailing Sentiment of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Doctors is of no weight against the Unitarians. And that particularly for these Reasons.

1. The Men that followed the Sentiment then prevailing differed from the Doctrin even of the foregoing Platonists, as well as the rigid Unitarians, as appears from what has been alledged in the last Chapter. There we have seen, it was the current Opinion of the ancient Platonists, as well as of the strictest Unitarians, not only that the Holy Ghost is not God, but also that the Son is not the God that has no other God above him, has not consequently the same Essence with the Father, and is not Eternal and Omniscent like him. What pretence then can the Nicene and Post-Nicene Doctors, or their Disciples, have to plead *Antiquity and Universality*, and to tell Us that upon that account We ought to submit to their Sentiment? Some think that the Nicene Creed imports very little or no more than *Semi-Arianism*. Howbeir, whether or no the Nicene Platonists went further than the remaining *Anti-Nicene* Writers or than most or any of them, it is evident that the *Post-Nicene* are gone beyond the *Anti-Nicene* or *Semi-Arians*; and thus 'tis evident the Doctrin is varied from that of the *Anti-Nicene* Platonists, and consequently 'tis in vain for the present (*Scholastick*) *Trinitarians* to pretend to *Antiquity* or *Tradition*.

2. We plainly see what led the generality of the Nicene Doctors into farther Error; Namely, the too much leaning to *Plato*, and more and more following, or, as they might imagin, improving, his Conceits, if they went farther than the *Anti-Nicene*. Many of the *Anti-Nicene*, for two Ages before, had begun to *Platonize*, as we before observed. And what was so unhappily begun by the Christian Platonists, or Converted Philosophers, was still (it seems) carried to a greater excess, in process of time, by the Men in Authority, and their Followers, at least in point of rigidity and violence. Howbeir, all the Unscriptural Niceties and Terms of Art of the suppo'd Orthodox are found in the Philosophy of *Plato*, or it's Followers, (which those Fathers professed to admire:) Can we then question from whence they drew 'em? (See *Le Clerc's Life of Eusebius*, p. 69. &c.) Some think it very clear, that the *Semi-Arians* are the true Platonick *Trinitarians*. And some esteem, that *Plato's Orthodoxy* goes yet farther, and that Dr. *Sherlock's* or the Nicene or *Post-Nicene* Notions are true *Platonism*. Howsoever it be, when Men had over-shot themselves, they might easily go further.

3. It is notorious, that the most part of the Nicene Doctors were uncharitable, (and consequently unchristian,) revengeful, violent, and ambitious Prelates, who sought nothing but to do spite to one another, to impose imperiously upon one another, and to put one another out of their Places. Now are not the Decisions of such Men to be much valued! And are not such Men fit to dictate to others, and to exercise Dominion over the Conscience of their Fellow-Servants! They did so much intimi-

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date those that followed the ancient Doctrin, and even the Emperor himself, that for the most part these did wretchedly prevaricate. Are those the Ways that Christianity prescribes? Or is not this the Method to suppress the Truth, and maintain what wants good Arguments to support itself by?

4. For the same reasons the Judgment of the *Post-Nicene* Fathers is altogether insignificant. Those whom fallible Men condemn as Hereticks, may be the true Orthodox; and those who pass for and stile themselves Orthodox, may be erroneous, and may mistake in most abstruse Matters. Howbeit, the *Nicene* Popes, and their Followers, domineering in the Church, as if they had been infallible, got their Determinations back'd with most severe Edicts, insomuch that it was made no less than Death but to keep any *Unitarian* Writings. Thus Christians taught one another Cruelty, and, tho' but just escaped themselves out of the Heathenish Persecutions, they inhumanely Persecuted one another. No wonder then if for the most part they led one another, as Mules are driven with stripes; especially considering the plausible Pretence, that this Zeal was for the honour of Christianity. Such Measures are rightly exposed in these Words of Dr. *Whitchcot*. "All those of a Party are bound to one Opinion, and to believe as their Party believes. Therefore I except against those that have blindly gone on without Consideration. For these have not acted by the Guidance of Human Reason. *Select. Sermon. p. 24.*

5. What right had these Men, or any of them, to set up for Universal or Magisterial Judges of abstruse Controversies? Who gave them Authority to decide for other Men, and to lord it over their Faith? What title had they to straiten the Terms of Union, and to exclude out of the Church all that dissented from them in those at least most nice and intricate Speculations? Who commissioned them to invent and impose, herein, new Words and Decisions, or new and magisterial Creeds? Who order'd them to determine Magisterially to their own Fancies the Generality of the comprehensive expressions of Scripture?

6. Notwithstanding the violence of the rigid *Platonists*, their novel and unscriptural Decisions have not been constantly and universally submitted to, but there are still and there have always been many *Unitarians*. There were many good Bishops, at and after the Council of *Nice*, that could by no means be prevail'd upon to renounce their Faith; and their Constancy encouraged multitudes of others to adhere to the ancient Doctrin. Not only the generality of Christians even then were so far from holding the Holy Ghost to be God, that the prevailing *Platonists* at *Nice* durst not determine it; but also *Gregory Nazianzen* himself once owns that if they of his Party had commonly Preached that Sentiment it would have caused confusion in the Church and scandalized good Christians: See *Petav. De Trin. L. 2. C. 7. S. 2.* (why could they not as well have carried the condescension one step farther; and then all had been well?) and we see *Hilary* calls the Holy Ghost but the Gift, which he prays not to, but asks of the Father: But, moreover, maugre the extremest Severities procured by the *Nicene* Fathers against the *Unitarians*, the Doctrin of Christ's being a Creature remained still rooted in the Hearts of so many Christians, that about some 20 Years after *Constantine's* Death the whole Christian World, as *St. Jerom* expresses it, appear'd to be *Unitarian*. Then good *Gregory* comforted himself, and his few Auditors, with these Reflections; "The *Unitarians* have the Churches, but We *Trinitarians* are the Temples of God; they

" they have the People, but the Angels are with US; my Flock indeed is little, but they hear my Voice." *Serm. 35 against the Arians.* But indeed the *Unitarians* had not only the People, but they had also the Priests and the Bishops. *Unitarianism*, the ancient Doctrin, or that which since the proceedings against *Arius* is call'd *Arianism*, was confirmed and established by ten several Councils. And that of *Rimini* was the most Numerous Assembly of Bishops, that ever met together. Not only several Princes and Kings and People for many Ages have been *Unitarians*, but some Emperors also were converted to *Unitarianism*. But those that succeeded them, and that had been brought up in the *Trinitarian* Sentiment, not only made use of the most violent Means to change the Face of Religion, but could never be prevail'd with to examin, themselves, the Merit of the Cause, witness *Theodosius* the Great. Thus Prejudice and Inconsideration being arm'd with the utmost or most obstinate Cruelty, 'tis no wonder if Error spread. By the like Means, the Truth of the Reformation in these late Ages has been wholly extirpated in *Bohemia* and *Spain*, and is now at the last gasp in *France*. Nevertheless, as *Sandius* has shewn, there have been all along many *Unitarians* in several Parts of the World. And there are still to this Day many *Unitarian* Churches in the *Mahometan* and *Pagan* Dominions, and some in *Transylvania*, *Hungaria*, *Slavonia*, and *Ilyricum*. The very *Nestorian* Churches in *Asia* and *Africa* are so numerous that it is thought the *Nestorians* are more in Number than all the *Protestants* in the World, or than all the Members of the Church of *Rome*. Now even the *Nestorians* are reputed to be a Branch of the *Arians* or the *Ebionites*, or near akin to them. See *Sandii Nucl.* p. 118. 119. and *Jurieu's Pastor Let.* Vol. 1. p. 157. But particularly see what *Sandius* notes of the *Christians* of *St. Bartholomew*, and of those of *St. Thomas*, and of *St. James*, (so called because originally converted to Christianity by those Apostles,) and of the *Abyssins*, the *Armenians*, *Maronites*, *Copts*, &c. who are *Unitarians*, or agree with the *Arians*, and are reck'ned to be in greater Number even than the *Nestorians*. Howbeit, these Considerations are not absolutely essential to the Matter in hand. For

(8.) *The Prevalency in general of an Opinion is no Argument, that it is agreeable to Truth and acceptable to God.* Witness the Universal Prevalency of *Heathenism* of old, and even the great Prevalency of *Mahometism*. (Which shews that God will try, but not force Men.) If you ask then the *Unitarians* where are their Churches, and where they were in such or such an Age, they need not reply otherwise than by asking again these Questions, Where were the Churches of the true Religionists in the times of *Noah*, of *Thara* and his Son *Abraham*, of *Elias*, and of the general Degeneracy of the *Children of Israel*, and all the while that the generality of *Christians*, incontestably, and even according to the Sentiment of *Protestants*, were defiled with many *Corruptions* and *Superstitions* and *Idolatries*? The true and pure Church of God, *Protestants* must own, was at those times in a manner Invisible, shut up within the Walls of a few Private Families, exiled out of the Places of great Concourse, and driven into the Wilderness. The People of God then indeed was but a little Flock. And why might it not likewise be so, when the *Unitarians* were oppressed, were but few in number, and were reduc'd to great extremities? A Thousand Years in the sight of God is but as one Day. God may think fit to permit the Wicked and Violent to persecute his People for many Days. Hereby he tries his Elect, he punishes their Sins, he trains them up for Heaven thro' the suffering of Affliction and Con-  
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rempt, he blinds a vicious World, but at last he will shew that he can draw Light out of Darkness, and that the Strength of Hell shall not be able to prevail finally against his Church, for God in his own time may call her from her Exile, may redeem her from her Captivity, and make her shine as the Sun, and then the Earth shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord as the Waters cover the Sea. And it is certain, there is and can be no Prescription against the Truth.

The Prevalency then of the *Trinitarian* Sentiment, for any of the past Ages since the Apostles, can be no Argument against the *Unitarians*. We read, in the Second Chapter of *Judges*, at the 7th, 10th, 11th, and 12th. Verses, that "the People of *Israel* served the Lord all the Days of *Joshuah*, and all the Days of the Elders who out-lived *Joshuah*, and who had seen all the great Works of the Lord that he did for *Israel*; but that, when all that Generation was gathered unto their Fathers, the next Generation knew not the Lord, and the Children of *Israel* did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served other Gods, and provoked the Lord to anger. And why could not a like Defection happen, immediately or soon after the Decease of the Apostles? Even in the time of the Apostles there were Heresies. And we see it is the Complaint of the earliest Doctors, that the Apostles were no sooner departed but Christians corrupted themselves apace. And if it was so, that ought afterwards to be no Prejudice against the Truth. As Bishop *Taylor* well observes in his 22d. Sermon. "When a Truth returns from Banishment by a *Psyllimium*, if it was from the first, tho' the holy Fire has been buried or the River ran under ground, yet we do not call that new; since Newness is not to be accounted of by a proportion to our short lived Memories, or to the broken Records and Fragments of Story left after the Inundation of Barbarism and War, and Change of Kingdoms, and Corruption of Authors; but by its relation to the Fountain of our Truths, &c. Thus it is evident that the *Objection* of the *Trinitarians*, founded upon the pretended *Antiquity and Universality* of their Sentiment, is absolutely *Unreasonable*. And therefore We must conclude that Controversy, with this Consideration; *Viz.*

( 9. ) *The only Authority that We can and ought to rely upon, is that of the Bible.* As Mr. *Chillingworth* excellently well says, the BIBLE only is the Religion of Protestants. I see plainly, says he, Fathers against Fathers, Popes against Popes, the same Fathers against themselves, Councils against Councils, &c. What Method then to judge of the Truth can We take, but that which even St. *Austin* proposes? *Contr. Maxim. L. 3. C. 14.* "We ought not, says he, to object to one another either the Council of *Nice* or that of *Rimini*, but We are to consider the Matter by the Scripture it self." *Daleus* in the first Chapter of his first Book *De usu Patrum* quotes a Passage out of St. *Cyprian*, importing, that when the Channels or Streams of the Ecclesiastical Tradition seem confuse, or broken and corrupted, we must have recourse to the Spring or Fountain's Head. Every Mans Reason, that considers, will tell him, that there are no other Measures then to be taken, there being no later Prescription to be taken against the Truth. And God himself expressly sends us thither. *Isa. 8. 20.* *To the Law, or the (Divine) Testimony: If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them.* But as for the Fathers, it is evident that no stress can be laid on their Authority; for, as the learned *Daleus* shews in his Book *of the Use of the Fathers*, they all had Errors, and differed

from one another in several weighty Particulars, and often differed from their own selves, being unsettled and inconstant in their Notions, not knowing their own Mind, one day holding one thing, and another time asserting the contrary. This may be a Sign, that they searched after the Truth, like other Men, as well as they could; (which is very commendable, and is every ones indispensable Duty :) But it is not the Character of those, who are infallible, and who must implicitely and absolutely be followed as our Rule.

## C H A P. IX.

### *A Second (General) Objection, against the Unitarian System, Answered.*

**T**HE next *Objection*, on which the *Trinitarians* commonly lay great stress, is, *That the Work of Redemption, and what the Scripture ascribes to our Saviour, is above the Capacity of a Man, it being impossible for a Creature, to become the Object of Worship and hear the Prayers of Men, to make Satisfaction for Sins or reconcile God to those that have forfeited his Favour, to know the Hearts, to forgive Sins, to govern the Universe, to raise the Dead, to judge the World, and do whatsoever the Father doth.*

In answering this, this Reflection cannot but be premised; that it is lamentable, Men are usually so careless as not to inform themselves rightly of the Sentiment of those whom they condemn, or are so unsincere as not fairly to represent it. But most certainly this is the Case here. As for my part, I absolutely take party neither with the *Socinians* nor with the *Arians*, but think it presumptuous to determine expressly a Mystery which the Scripture has left in a great Generality. Howbeit, I see plainly, and am fully persuaded, that the present *Objection* is wholly groundless, and doth not in the least invalidate either of those Systems; for it is founded on an (either wilfully or otherwise) erroneous and mistaken Supposition, as if the *Arians* or *Socinians* held our Saviour to be a mere Creature, or a mere Man. Surely it is a Point of Justice, and a Duty of Christian Charity, not to misrepresent the Cause of any Party, but to endeavour to take it in the best Sense, and put upon it the favourable Construction possible. But the quite contrary is done in this *Objection*. The *Unitarians* therefore answer it thus.

According to our Sentiment, Christ, in the business of Salvation or Redemption, is not left to work with the bare Strength and Capacity of a Man, but is commissioned of God and by him constituted in Authority, constantly enlightened and influenced by the Holy Spirit, and directed and assisted by the Divine Wisdom and Power dwelling in him. For we hold, agreeably to the Scripture, that (the Father assisting, acting and dwelling in his Son, by his Inspiration and the Influences of his Power and Wisdom,) the Fulness of the God-head, inhabiting in him, by its constant concurrence

currence enables him to perform all that he is appointed to do; *Christ* therefore, in the Execution of his Office, is not to be considered as a mere Creature, but as a Creature in and by which God works, and which acts for God, and most eminently represents God, and is most intimately possible one with God. There is no Unitarian but holds all this; believing that by the said Means there is as strict an Union betwixt the God-head and Christ as there can be betwixt God and a Creature. This is particularly what the *Arians* mean, in giving the title of God to our Lord Jesus Christ. And this especially is what the *Socinians* intimate, by their seemingly strange Saying, that Christ was made God, *Homo Deum factus*.

What Advantage then over the *Unitarians* have the *Trinitarians*, by their Notion of the Incarnation of a supposed Second Divine Person? Can any thing be done by a Man supposed Hypostatically or Personally United with a Second Divine Person, that cannot be performed by a Man in whom the Fulness of the God-head dwells in the manner aforesaid? Since it is the God-head, dwelling in Christ, that doth the Marvellous Works, can he not do whatsoever God pleases, and whatsoever God can do?

And indeed what can the *Trinitarians* mean by their Term of the *Hypostatical Union* of a Divine Person with Christ's Human Nature, but *this In-dwelling* of the God-head in the Man Christ Jesus? Dr. *Sherlock*, at the 210th. and 211th. Pages of his Answer to the Bishop of Gloucester's Book, gives the true Description of the *Trinitarian* Notion of the Incarnation in these Words. *The perfect Wisdom and Goodness of our Saviour was not mere Human Nature, tho' as innocent and perfect as Human Nature can be in this World; but the Divinity dwelling and acting in Human Nature, influencing and guiding all its Motions, as the Soul governs the Body; for this is a true Notion of a God Incarnate, that God lives and acts in Human Nature, and is the Principle of all its Actions and Motions.*

And is there any thing here that the *Unitarians* do not hold? Do they assert, that Christ did any thing without the Divine Motions, or without God's Guidance and Acting in him? They firmly believe, that the Man Christ Jesus readily and willingly assented to the whole Will of God, and that God constantly assisted him, and thus wrought in and by him all the Super-natural Works that Christ did.

What colour of reason then have the *Trinitarians* to pretend, that the Work of Redemption surpasses the Capacity which the *Unitarians* ascribe to Christ? It is plain, that, since the *Unitarians* assert that God constantly influences and guides, assists and acts in and by Christ, (which it seems is the Summ of what the *Trinitarians* themselves hold, which expressly is all that the Scripture teaches of the Union between God and Christ, and which most certainly suffices to empower Christ to do whatsoever God can do,) the Dispute and Quarrel here of the *Trinitarians* with the *Unitarians* is altogether groundless and unwarrantable. We have all the reason imaginable to love God with all our Soul, and to be eternally thankful to his Divine Majesty, for thus addressing himself to us miserable Sinners, wonderfully speaking and acting in and by his Son Christ Jesus to reconcile the World unto himself, and enabling him to Save to the uttermost all those that come to God thro' him.



As was said, this is all that the Scripture expressly teaches us concerning this Matter. The Scripture represents God doing all things for Christ, upon his request. The *Trinitarians* therefore cannot justly find fault with the Doctrine of the *Unitarians* concerning our Saviour's Person. But the *Unitarians* are bound, to reject what the *Trinitarians* add thereto not only without express Authority of Scripture but contrary to the clearest Light of Scripture and Reason.

Altho' God by the Influence of his Divine Wisdom and Power dwells in Christ, and is represented as constantly assisting him and acting in and by him, yet the Scripture nowhere says that God (or the Father) and Christ make but one Person. It cannot be imagined, and the *Trinitarians* themselves do not assert, that by God's dwelling in Christ is meant any more than God's constant guiding and assisting him. Now it no way follows, that because a Son willeth all that his Father willeth, and the Father constantly guides and assists his Son, therefore the Father and the Son are but one Person. But it is evident, that, the Father being an intelligent Being, and the Son a distinct intelligent Being from the Father, the Father and the Son must necessarily be two Persons. For a Spirit, as long as he exists, cannot but have always in himself, distinctly from all other Spirits, what constitutes a Person, and can say some things of himself distinctly from others. Thus, how strictly soever God and Christ be United, Christ can say of himself that *he* is a Creature so many Ages Old, & God can say that *he* is Self-existent and never had a Beginning. Now here are two *he's*, or two *I's*, and consequently 2 Persons, for these are *Personal Pronouns*, & each of them denotes a distinct Person.

And the Scripture is so far from asserting God and Christ to be one Person, that it constantly *distinguishes* Christ from God. Indeed, in the Scripture-style, a special Messenger and Representative may bear the Name of him whom he most especially acts for and represents. And Christ may moreover be termed a God in an inferior Sense, as Kings and Princes are called Gods in Scripture. He may also be called God, inasmuch as a Divine Influence most intimately dwells in him. But the Scripture nor only nowhere (says that Christ is *literally* the same God with the eternal God, (or is the Whole of the Father,) but it teaches the contrary. For it all along represents Christ as a Man in whom God dwells, and whom God exalts to the highest Dignity over all other Creatures. And Christ himself expressly says, that the Father is greater than *he*. Which manifestly imports, that tho' God dwells and acts in him, yet God is *distinct* from him, and still keeps the Supreme Authority to himself, reserving to himself the Power to act in him when or so far as he pleases, for he was not pleased, for instance, to enable him to dispose wholly of the Gifts of the Spirit till after his Ascension, and he had not revealed to him when should be the Day of Judgment, but kept to himself the Times and Seasons, &c. Thereby then it appears, that Christ is but a Man acting for God, and to that end assisted of God, as was said; tho' the *Trinitarians* generally will not allow him to be truly a Man, but only a Human Nature, which is but an imaginary Shadow of a Man. When they call him *God-Man*, they mean only a Divine Person united with their General Conception of a Human Nature that has no real Subsistence, which is not truly a Man. For, as the Bishop of Gloucester excellently well observes, ( p. 63d. of his *Reflections upon the late Examination of the Discourse of the Descent of the Man Christ Jesus from Heaven*,) "to say that the Man Jesus has no Subsistence of his own, is to say that he has no o-

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"ther Subſiſtence than an Accident has in union with the Subſtance to which it belongs; and this makes him inferior to any Man God ever made." Nay, this actually unmans him. (Therefore the Biſhop rightly calls this monſtrous Doctrine *Scholaſtick Gibberish*.) Whereas the Scripture not only never calls Chriſt a *God Man*, but in a great many places calls him a *Man*, (*John* 8. 40. *John* 1. 30. *Acts* 13. 38. *1 Tim.* 2. 5. &c.) and expreſſly ſays, that, as to his Perſon and Human Circumſtances, he was in all things like unto us, Sin excepted. (*Hebr.* 2. 17. *Hebr.* 4. 15. *1 Cor.* 15. 21.) Now, if he be a *Man* he has a Subſiſtence of his own, for ſo has a *Man*; and if he has a Subſiſtence of his own, he cannot be ſuppoſed to be united to the Godhead, and to be a God, but as the *Unitarians* hold he is, Namely, in aſmuch as God conſtantly guides him and acts in and by him in the High Station in which He has placed him, (which, after all, the *Trinitarians*, as we have ſeen, own is all they mean by the Incarnation or Perſonal Union;) and ſo it is moſt incontestably evident, that notwithstanding the Difference that the *Trinitarians* make between Them and the *Unitarians*, they can give no reaſon for their pretence, that according to the *Unitarian System* the Lord Jeſus is *Unſuppoſed* for the Work of Redemption. And if he were ſo according to the *Unitarian*, from what has been ſaid it manifeſtly appears he ſhould as much be ſo according to the *Trinitarian Scheme*. For both found his Capacity upon the In-dwelling or Aſſiſting Godhead in him.

To this the *Trinitarians* reply, that except the Godhead and the Man Jeſus Chriſt were ſuppoſed to make but one Perſon, Chriſt could not be ſaid, as he is, to do thoſe things, which none but the Divine Power doth. Therefore it muſt be infer'd, that this one Perſon, Chriſt, is *God-Man*, and implies a Divine and a Human Nature Perſonally-united together. For the Scripture attributes the Miracles of our Saviour to his own inherent Power, and his Revelations and Propheſies to his own Perſonal Knowledge. For it is ſaid, that he knew what was in Man, that he rebuked the Wind and the Sea, that he will raiſe the Dead at the laſt Day, &c.

To this Plea the *Unitarians* answer, that, by the ſame reaſoning, when our Saviour promiſed his Diſciples (*John* 14. 12,) that They ſhould do greater Works than thoſe he had done, the *Trinitarians* cannot avoid concluding, that they ſhould do thoſe Miracles by their own Power, and that they ſhould then be conſidered as indeed Perſonally-united with the Godhead. But cannot the *Trinitarians* conſider, that Men may be ſaid to do thoſe things, which are effected by the Means and Helps which they make uſe and can diſpoſe of? Is not a General ſaid to take a City, which his Army ſtorms at his Orders? Is not a Phyſician ſaid to do a Cure, that is effected, with God's Bleſſing, by the Remedy he has preſcrib'd? In like manner may not Men be ſaid to do thoſe things, which are wrought by the Power, which God has inveſted them with, or granted them the diſpoſal of? To come then to the objected Particulars.

Chriſt works Miracles, raiſes the Dead, forgives Sins, and doth whatſoever the Father does, by deſiring God to do theſe things, at his requeſt, which the Father alloweth him to ask and to expect of him. Therefore, all things whatſoever, that he ſees or knows the Father doth or can do, and that are requiſite to the fulfilling the Work of Salvation, Chriſt begs the Father to do them, and, the Father doing them at this his moſt beloved Son's Interceſſion, Chriſt is cenſed or reckoned to do

do them. The way that all Intelligent Beings Do those Things that God has put in their Power, is by *Willing* them, and *Using the Means* which God or Reason has shewn they may be effected by. For instance ; For a Man to move his Hands or Feet, his Soul needs but to will it ; to nourish his Body, he must take the things, and apply them, as God has appointed to that end. Now, it seems, all the Means which God has appointed for Christ to do whatsoever the Father doth, is to know them, to know the Father will do them for him, and to desire them of the Father. For tho' it be said, that Christ did and is to do most wonderful Works, yet the Scripture is very far from saying that he doth them of Himself, or by his own Power. Himself says the quite contrary, *John 5. 19. The Son can do nothing of himself.* *John 14. 10. The Father that dwelleth in me, He doth the Works.* *Matth. 12. 28. I cast out Devils by the Spirit of God.* And *John 11. 41, 42. Father, I thank thee that thou Hearest me always.* How could Christ have declared more expressly, that he doth not the Supernatural Works by his own Power, but by the Means which have been said, Namely, By knowing that the Father will do them for him, and By desiring the Father to do them by his Divine Power and by what Means He pleases to use ? Seeing that the Father has promised our Saviour to hear him always, he may truly say, that all things which the Father has are his. And therefore it is certain, that not only there never was such another Prophet as Christ, but also that he is the most Excellent and most Dignified Creature that can be. But yet, we see, it doth not follow, that, because he doth what none but God can do, he is therefore hypothetically united with a Divine Person, and, that, distinct from the Father. The Scripture shews us, How Christ doth all Supernatural Things ; he himself tells us, he desires the Father to do them, and the Father always grants his requests, and doth what he desires ; and he desires nothing but what he knows the Father will grant ; and the Father has promis'd, and constantly gives him, whatsoever is necessary for the Discharge of his Office.

Christ then may truly say, that as the Father has Life in himself, or at his disposal, so has he given to the Son to have Life in himself. For as the Father doth all things by *Willing* them, so Christ doth all things by *Desiring* them. As God has put Power in the Natural Sun, to vivify all Seeds in the Earth ; so he has, in an infinitely more excellent way, invested Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, with Power to quicken the Dead. But still the Power of the Lord Jesus is the Divine Power. And we see, that, as we have said, God makes Christ to be Partaker thereof. So that as the Father has Divine Power in him, so has He given to the Son to have Divine Power in him ; inasmuch, that when the Father has shewn him a Miraculous Thing, the Son can do the same likewise, by the Assistance of the Divine Power, which dwells in him, and which he constantly has the use of, by *Willing* and *Asking*, or affectionately *Desiring*.

Thus ; Christ knows the Hearts, by the same Means ; by the Divine Power that is in him, or annexed to him, and that reveals them to him. ( See the Brief History of the Unitarians, on *John 2. 25.* and *Revel. 2. 23.* ) So that ; as Dr. Sherlock himself says, at the top of the 196th Page of his last Book ; the Knowledge of Christ is from the Father's dwelling in him. And by that Means, Christ Governs the Universe, and will Judge the World.

As to Christ's *Efficacy in obtaining Forgiveness* for all those Sinners, whom he persuades and excites to forsake their Sins and to become Obedient and New Creatures; it is the strangest thing in the World to imagin, that God cannot grant that ( which is altogether agreeable to the Propensions of his own Nature ) to his most beloved Son, even upon that Act and Submission of his, which argues the most perfect Obedience, and makes the most solemn Reparation to the Divine Justice and Authority.

As Dr. *Whitchot* expresses himself upon this Subject, *Pages 62 d and 63 d* of his *Select Sermons*; " We are in the hands of him that is Primarily and Originally " Good : And He will certainly commiserate every Case, so far as it is compassionate. Now the Case of a Sinner is compassionate, if he be Penitent." God might then surely accept of Christ's Sacrifice as a sufficient Attonement, seeing that it so fully confirms God's Hatred to Sin and his Good Will to those that Obey him, and is consequently the powerfulest Motive and the likeliest Means to engage those for whom that Sacrifice is offered, and who are not yet incorrigible, to forsake their evil Ways, to accept the Offers of Grace, and to be reconciled to God. Christ's Death is the fullest Confirmation of God's Good Will to those that obey him, seeing that upon the account of his Son's perfect Obedience He has exalted him to the highest Glory, even of being Partaker of the Divine Nature and Power. And it is also the fullest Confirmation of God's absolute Hatred to Sin, seeing He would not pardon the Sins of Men without this Consideration & Condition, that he, who was Innocent & the most Perfect & Excellent Creature, & pleaded for the Fallen Race of Mankind should, as their Advocate, suffer in their stead, expiate their Sins with his Blood, and thus exhibit a most solemn Demonstration of the Demerit of Sin. But this no where is represented in Scripture as a perfectly equivalent Satisfaction in the most rigorous sense. And neither Scripture nor Reason shew, that God can Pardon but upon such Terms. ( See the aforesaid *Sermons of Dr. Whitchot*, Pag. 301, &c. on *Act. 13. 38.* )

As the Bishop of Gloucester observes, at the 85th and following Pages of his aforesaid Reflections on the Book of Dr. *Sherlock* against him; " Christ's meriting of " God the Father cannot be understood in the highest sense of meriting, as we may " merit of one another; that is, by doing acts of Kindness and Beneficence from mere Good Will, or no antecedent Obligation to the Person to whom the " Kindness is shewn. 'Tis nothing but the wretched Popish Doctrine of Merit, that has made it an offensive word in relation to God. But taking *Meritum* and " *Mereri* in the Fathers sense, there is no offence to be taken at it, as respecting God : For they meant no more than having a right to be rewarded by him, from the performance of that Obedience or Service to which he has annexed the reward by a most gracious Promise. But as it is impossible to do God " Almighty a Kindness or Benefit, so I cannot understand how the Son of God " himself could, in this sense, merit of his Father the Redemption of Mankind : " since he did or suffered, by virtue of the Union, nothing but what the Will of " his Father obliged him unto. *Lo, I come*, said he, *to do thy Will, O God.* And " his perfectly complying with this Will, was his meriting our Redemption of " his Father, as He willed to make him the Author thereof upon that Condition.

" And



" And therefore Mr. Calvin says well, *Totum Meritum Christi pendet à Voluntate Divina*. Now, will any Man say, that Christ, as Man, did not *thus* merit ?  
 " Then by the most wonderful Submission and Self-Resignation of the Man Christ Jesus, who was most Innocent, to the dreadful and undeserved Death of the Cross, God's absolute Authority over his Creatures was most highly vindicated, after Adam and his apostate Off-spring had wofully eclipsed the Glory of his Sovereignty, and the Authority of his Laws. This *second Adam*, by the sinless and most perfect Obedience of his Life, was an high Vindicator thereof ; but his enduring most inexpressible Torments, (which he did as Man,) and dying the most cursed Death of the Cross, as our Sacrifice, did God the Father as high Honor, in the Face of the Sun, as all the Sins of Mankind, put together, could do him Dishonor.  
 " And by this means this Sacrifice became Satisfactory, so as that God would, for the sake thereof, grant Terms of Pardon and Reconciliation to Fallen Mankind, since He now saw it most agreeable to all his Attributes to do so." Thus far this Learned Prelate.

In Summ ; in Answer to the whole Objection. *Christ is the Excellenest Creature possible, and the most like unto God, and the fittest to be an Instrument in the Hand of God ; and God entirely loves him, and continually communicates to him the Use of the Divine Power and the Assistance of the Divine Wisdom, and the Fulness of the God-head constantly dwells in him, and in his State of Humiliation he received the Holy Spirit without measure and not in small portions and by intervals like the Prophets, and all the Angels and Archangels are wholly subjected to him as their Prince, and incessantly attend his Orders, God being willing to make him as Great as a Creature can be made, and God in fine is as much United to him as it is possible for God to be United with a Creature, God remaining still a distinct Being, and the Creature a distinct Person ; And the Unitarians hold, that such an excellent and dignified Creature as this, can obtain of God and can perform any thing, that is to be perform'd or obtain'd, and they do not conceive what more than this the Trinitarians can reasonably think to be requisite.*

It may be observed, that according to the Unitarian System our Lord Jesus Christ is a more precious and worthy Being than all other Creatures together ; that, yet, not only the word, *Satisfaction*, is no where in Scripture, but also that it is not the Notion of Sacrifices and Attonements to make a full Compensation ; that under the Gospel the Acts of Piety and Obedience which are most acceptable to God are figuratively called Attonements or Sacrifices, (as Alms-giving, Praying with fervour, Mortifying carnal Affections, which is termed the offering our Bodies in Sacrifice to God ; ) and that by many Places of Scripture it appears that this expression, *to redeem*, signifies to deliver from some Evil, and to put into a better State. See *Exod. 6. 6. and 15. 13. Luke 1. 68. Ps. 49. 7, 8, 15. and 111. 9. Luke 2. 38. &c.*

### *An Appendix to the IXth. Chapter.*

**T**HERE remains but one Article to be here considered, to give a particular and full Answer to every Branch of the Objection mention'd in the beginning of this Chapter. It is this ; " that, according to the Ideas which the Unitarian System gives of Christ, it seems, he cannot be supposed to be able to  
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"hear the Prayers of Men," or to be a proper Object of Worship." But this will particularly appear to be a groundless and unnecessary piece of Wrangling, if these Considerations be duly weighed.

1. There are divers Kinds of Worship, according to the Nature of the Subject to whom it is to be paid. (See *Grotius* on *Revel.* 19. 10.) All that the *Trinitarians* can ascribe to Christ, in following the Scripture, consists in reverencing him, to the Honour of the Father, as the Mediator of the New Covenant, and, under God, the Universal Monarch, acting for the Father, in whom the Father dwells, whom the Father most extraordinarily assists with his Divine Wisdom and Power, to enable him, in his Mediatory Kingdom, to govern the Universe and save to the uttermost those that come to God thro' him, and with whom consequently the Divine Nature is as intimately United as possible. (The *Trinitarians* acknowledge, that the whole Person of Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and consequently it seems incontestable that the whole Person of Christ is to be honoured as Mediator, or with Mediatory and Subordinate Honour, having receiv'd Kingdom, Power, and Godhead, from the Father, and acting for the Father.) Now thus, and according to all these and the like respects, the *Unitarians* worship the Lord Jesus Christ, and no otherwise; even as one who is appointed to be honoured to the Glory of the Father, as one who is exalted to the highest Dignity in the Universe, and as one with whom the Divine Nature is as intimately united as possible, so as that he is enlightened with the Divine Wisdom, and he disposes of the Divine Power and Inspiration, as of his own, it being made his, by his Union to the Divine Nature, and by the Father his dwelling in him, or by the Divine Assistance and Inspiration without measure attending him, always conducting and illuminating him, and thereby exalting his Spirit to the highest Pitch of Grandeur, Wisdom, and Power, and making him in the most eminent manner possible one with God.

2. The *Unitarians* thus holding the Lord Jesus Christ United and Assisted with the Divine Nature, the *Trinitarians* cannot justly pretend, that the *Unitarian* System represents him as unable to perform any thing, which by the *Trinitarian* Notion of the Incarnation he may be suppos'd to be capable of; seeing the *Unitarians* hold, that he, without measure, (according to the Scripture Phrase,) is illuminated with the Divine Wisdom, and disposes of and is assisted by and enjoys the Divine Power as his own: so that he may hear Men, and succor them. It appears nevertheless, as was said, incontestable, that (his Kingdom, as was observed, being but a Mediatory Kingdom, or his Reign being but a Government under God, subject to and directed by the Father, so that the Father is still to be considered not barely as jointly ruling, but as literally the Supreme Ruler) the Lord Jesus Christ cannot reasonably be addressed to but as Mediator, or as the Vicegerent of the Universe, and consequently is to be worshipped but with a Mediatory or a Subordinate Worship. Wherefore the Body of the Prayers ought not to be addressed to him, (as they are in the Litany;) but the Father generally is to be Pray'd to, in the Name or thro' the Mediation of the Son: And some Ejaculations, and (particularly at the end or beginning of the Service) a short Address may be offered to the Son, to beseech him, to Intercede for us, to have Mercy upon us, and to assist us with his Grace. And according to the *Unitarian* System the Lord Jesus Christ can be thus addressed to and worshipped. This Subject,

concerning the *Worship of Christ as Mediator*, (or as a *Man exalted to the High Honor* with which it has pleased God to dignify him,) is fully treated of by *Limberch*, in his *Theologia Christiana*, Lib. 5. Cap. 18. The Author of the *Humble Inquiry*, at P. 15th. & 16th. of that Book, observes, this Doctrin, concerning Christ's Human Nature being capable, to know what passes upon Earth, and so to see and hear and assist Men, is so far from being (with any justice or reason) to be by the *Trinitarians* objected to the *Unitarian* System, that the greatest part and the most Learned of the *Trinitarians* agree with *Socinus* in this Point. For the School-Men, both *Thomists* and *Scotists*, and the *Lutherans*, generally, ascribe this Universal Knowledge to the Man Jesus Christ. And of the Modern *Reformed Divines*, that Author quotes Mr. *Baxter*, Dr. *Goodwin*, together with a worthy Divine of the Church of England who wrote a Book called *The Good Samaritan*, asserting, "that an Angel might be capable of Ruling the Universal Church on Earth;" [now a Human Soul in a gross and fleshy Body is an Angel shackled, and strained in a dark and close Dungeon, where he cannot exert his Powers and Faculties, no more than an Infant can reason like a Philosopher, but the Impediments being remov'd a Human Spirit is (wise & free & powerful) like an Angel, & knows as he is known, & perhaps can direct the Course of the Sun, or move the Globe of the Earth, as easily as a Child can a Tennis-Ball;] "that the Man Jesus Christ as easily inspects the whole Earth as we can view a Globe of an Inch Diameter; that he Intercedes particularly as Man and cannot be thought to Intercede in a Case if he do not know it; that the Human Understanding of Christ takes in all Occurrences which concern his Church; that like the Sun-Beams He pierces into every corner; and that as a Looking-Glass wrought in the form of a Globe represents the Images of all that is in the Room, so the enlarged Human Understanding of Christ takes in all things in Earth at once." (The *Unitarians* would only add, that Christ doth this, by the Assistance of the Divine Nature, dwelling in him, and both enlarging and enlightning his Understanding. And indeed if Christ acting in God's stead at the Head of the Universe represented not God, to the Glory and Service of God, and by God's Appointment, and if the Divine Nature, the Divine Knowledge, Power and Authority, dwelled not in the Man Jesus Christ, as the *Unitarians* hold; their Worship of him would be a kind of Idolatry: That is to say; if the Father, by his own Appointment, was not worshipped in Christ, in whom incontestably He most eminently dwells; or, which is the same, if Christ was not appointed by God, to be worshipped, to the Glory of the Father; to which end it is necessary, that the Father should make him partaker of his Nature and Power, as has been said; for tho' the Foreknowledge of Christ be not Universal, and tho' at sometimes he feels greater Influences of the God-head dwelling in him than at some other times, yet he must always receive sufficient Influences thereof to enable him to discharge the Parts of his Mediatory Kingdom; and the God-head, by a Divine Power, which is an Influence of the Father's, must constantly reside in and be as intimately as possible United with Christ, to make him the most eminent Divine *Schechina*, and to capacitate him to represent, as he doth, and act for, the Father, at the Helm of Government over all things, so that, being such a Representative of God as neither is nor ever was the like besides Him, He truly exhibits God, and the

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Divine Majesty, dwelling in him in a most extraordinary manner.) In a word, We hold that no other is of *himself* God, or *properly* and *eminently* God, Eternal and Almighty, but *the Father*. And we own no other for *Inferior* Gods, but such as are *truly* so, according to the *Divine Order and Appointment*: And we honour them accordingly. But *God only* We worship with *properly Divine Worship*. Howbeit, We worship God *mediately* or *relatively* in the Person of his *Representative*, and *Chief Officer*, Jesus Christ, who, *under God*, is the *Sovereign Prince*, and *Great Lord*, or *God*, or *Universal King*, who *acts* most *eminently* for God, that God may be honoured in him, and who is appointed thereto, to be honoured, and bowed to, or worshipped, to the *Glory of God*. And so we may truly and allowably worship God, *immediately* in his own Person, and *mediate'y* in the Person of his *Lieutenant* and most *eminent Representative* appointed thereunto, that God may be worshipped in him, in the extraordinary Honour that is paid him.

3. The Unitarians unanimously hold, that indeed we constantly are to bow the knee to and worship the Lord Jesus Christ, in offering our Petitions to the Father in his Name and thro' his Mediation, but that it is not necessary to address our selves otherwise than thus to him, and that *this* is sufficiently to call upon his Name in Prayer. And in the most ancient Liturgies extant, there are but very few words addressed to Christ. Which shews, that originally Christians addressed the current of their Prayers to the Father: excepting when, in a Vision, they saw the Lord Jesus Christ, and heard him speak to them; which St. Paul acquaints us happened to him once in the Temple, 2 Cor. 12. 8. 9.

4. It cannot indeed, reasonably, be denied, but that, when God in general is *Pray'd to*, and these Prayers are put up *in the Name of Christ*; then, both, the Mediatary Honour due to our Saviour is thereby paid him, and all is Supremely Worshipped that is to be Adored with Supreme or Direct and Ultimate Worship. Our Lord assures his Disciples, that whatsoever they shall ask the Father in his Name, the Father will give it them. John, 16. 23. No more then can be absolutely needful. In a word, the Unitarians honour the God-head above all things, and the Man Jesus Christ above all other Creatures. What can the Trinitarians do more? Or what can they in *this Worship* justly reprehend? Both Christ and the Holy Ghost will nothing but what the Father willerth, and they will all that the Father wills: Manifestly therefore it is sufficient to address to the Father; the Government of the Universe is but one Government; tho' God be the Supreme, and tho' Christ have a Sovereignty over all Creatures, yet, considering the Subordination and Good Order, and considering the perfect Agreement of their Wills and Affections, there is as it were but One Sovereign; but the Father is alone in himself the One only true Sovereign, the Sovereign properly and eminently; all own He sustains the Chiefest Part in the Supreme Majesty, Authority and Government.

## C H A P. X.

*A Third (General) Objection, consisting of Four Branches.*

**T**HE last *General Objection*, which the *Trinitarians* commonly reckon to be decisive against the *Unitarian* Interpretations and System, may be conceived as comprising these Particulars, and may be Summarily expressed in these Terms.

“ The *Unitarians* their too much leaning to Human Reason is the Cause of their Error, wherefore they should consider, that Reason, tho’ an excellent Light and Guide so far as its Province and Capacity extends, is, in some most sublime Points, short-sighted and blind, and consequently an incompetent Judge; then they might discern, that the *Unitarian* Interpretations, besides that they imply most unlikely Assertions, are forced and unnatural, and so remote from the obvious Import of the Words, that ’tis not to be conceived the generality of Christians, when they read the Scripture, can find out such Interpretations, and imagine that it is to be understood in that Sense, and therefore it is incredible that that is the true Meaning thereof; moreover, in opposition to all Reasonings, it is to be observed, that there are many Texts of Scripture, which make up a strong Evidence of the truth of the *Trinitarian* Sentiment, whereas, in fine, the Texts that the *Unitarians* alledge seem not express and positive for their System.

All these things are put together in one *Objection*, because they depend of or expressly support one another; the Intendment of the Argument being to convince the *Unitarians* that *they hearken too much to Reason and too little to Scripture*. This *Objection* then is properly made up of these *Four Branches*, which if the Reader pleases he may consider as so many distinct *Objections*, and which are so considerable that they very much deserve to be illustrated and carefully weighed, to understand the utmost force of them.

( 1. ) That Reason, tho’ an excellent Light and Guide so far as its Province and Capacity reaches, is, in several mysterious Instances, short-sighted and blind, and consequently an incompetent Judge.

( 2. ) That the *Unitarian* Interpretations imply some most unlikely Assertions, and are, besides that, forced and unnatural, and so remote from the obvious Import of the Words that ’tis not to be conceived the generality of Christians can understand the Scripture in that Sense.

( 3. ) That there are many Texts of Scripture, which, even taken asunder, but especially being put together, make up a strong Evidence for the *Trinitarian* Sentiment.

( 4. ) That the Texts, which the *Unitarians* alledge, seem not express and positive for their System.

( 1. ) That Reason, tho’ an excellent Light and Guide so far as its Province and Capacity reaches, is, in several mysterious Instances, short-sighted and blind, and consequently an incompetent Judge. The generality of Men attribute either too little or

too much to Reason. Nowbeit, if things be calmly and very carefully considered, it will be found that We ought to keep to a Mean betwixt these two Extremes.

Reason is to the Mind, what the Eyes are to the Body. None but the Blind can think that the Eyes are of no use to judge of Material Objects. Nevertheless, if we should take no other Counsel but that of our Eyes, we could not avoid the being deceived in several Instances.

The same must be said of Reason. Undoubtedly it is a noble and excellent Faculty. By a right use of it, We may credibly demonstrate the Being of a God, the Duties of Holiness and Vertue, the Futurity of Reward and Punishment, and all the eternal Truths of Natural Religion.

Notwithstanding all this, it is certain those have not thorowly considered the most obvious things, who do not discern, that in many Cases Reason is not only at a loss, but directly leads us to Error, actually representing to us several things as false, contradictory and impossible, which yet we may be sure are not such.

We see then by experience, that there can be nothing more unreasonable and unsafe than this Resolution, To believe Reason in nothing or to believe it in all things.

If we were to trust our Eyes at all times or else at no time at all, We must be forced to deny our being sensible that the Sun Shines when in its greatest Splendor, or We must be confident that all Sticks are Crooked when part in Water, as they seem then to be, and that all Towers are Round, because they appear so, at a certain distance.

Every Man knows, that there are some Means, to be assured when We ought, and when We ought not to credit our Eyes. In like manner, it cannot be doubted but that there are some Rules, whereby, if We carefully attend to them, We may be satisfied when our Reasonings are true and certain, and when not. (If these Rules were set into the greatest Light possible by considering Men, that could not but be an excellent Means to detect manifestly all dangerous Errors. Then it might be shewn, that *Transubstantiation* need not be believ'd, tho' the *Trinity* may.) For instance.

We see by experience, as was observed, that our Eyes deceive us, when, for instance, they will judge of the nicest Circumstances of Objects at a great distance from Us. And therefore We find it rational not to determine our Judgement, concerning these Particulars, without further Evidence. But if credible Persons assure us, that, to their certain knowledge, that Tower, for instance, is Square, which at a distance appears Round, We do not at all esteem it irrational, but most agreeable to Reason, to credit them, before, or rather than, the present Judgement of our own Eyes.

Likewise, concerning our Spiritual Eye-sight. There are undoubtedly several mysterious or sublime Matters, above the reach of Human Understanding. There are several things, which expressly appear to be impossible, which yet We are sure are certainly true.

We have, before, suppos'd that there are many such things. To give now some Instances of them; There are Demonstrations against the Possibility of Motion, holding that there is no *Vacuum*; and, holding a *Vacuum*, there are other

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Demonstrations against it: And yet there must either be a *Vacuum* or no *Vacuum*; and whether there be a *Vacuum* or no, We actually see there is Motion.

In like manner, We are sure, there must be such a thing as Eternity, and it must either consist of an eternal Succession of Moments, or else it must be an eternal Instant without Succession, the whole Eternity always present, without any part of it past or to come; yet, which of the two ways We hold, We find therein express and most manifest and unavoidable Contradictions.

We meet likewise with evident Contradictions and Impossibilities, whether We assert Matter to be divisible infinitely, or whether We suppose the contrary; and yet 'tis plain there can be no Medium, but it must necessarily be either the one or the other.

There are many such Cases. Now, what can We say to such things, but that they are *mysterious*, and that, so far as they are so, they are above our Capacity to judge of them, or to determine our selves about the *contrary Contradictions* concerning them?

But suppose a competent and credible Judge should certify to us which side the truth lies; so far as that Judge should appear to be a good Judge, it would be rational to assent to his Declaration, notwithstanding the Contradictions which our Reason finds in the Subject.

If such a Judge, for instance, should tell us, that Matter is divisible infinitely, that Eternity is a perpetual Duration without Succession, and that there is no *Vacuum*, it would be irrational not to believe him. Our own Reason in such a Case shews us, that, seeing we are credibly assured he knows these things, not only better than We, but perfectly well, it is reasonable to submit all our Difficulties to his Testimony.

It is then most evident, that in some Cases the most express Contradictions ought not in Reason to hinder our belief. For We believe that Matter either is Divisible infinitely or is not Divisible infinitely, tho' it is well known there are manifest Demonstrations against either of those Systems. We firmly believe there is such a thing as Eternity, tho' which way imaginable soever We conceive it to be, We find therein unavoidable Contradictions. We believe, that either there is a *Vacuum* or no *Vacuum*, tho' either seem absolutely Impossible. And if We knew an infallible Judge in these Matters, We would believe him, and should think We ought in Reason to believe him, whether he told Us there is a *Vacuum* or told Us there is no *Vacuum*, &c. It appears therefore, that not only We are ready to believe, but even that we actually believe, in some Cases, what evidently seems to Us to be contradictory and impossible.

Not that what is truly contradictory can be supposed to be possible. But, We must own, some things may seem to Us to be truly contradictory, which really are not so: And, therefore, if a Judge, credibly known to be infallible, should tell us that that is not contradictory which seems to be so to Us, We ought in reason to believe him.

Now, wherein is it likely We may sooner be puzzled with seeming Contradictions, than in the most sublime and incomprehensible Subject, the eternal, the infinite, the necessary, and divine Being? And who in reason can be thought a more credible and competent Judge of these things, than Almighty God Himself? We

We are sensible, that in some Cases We must believe some things to be true, which yet, after all our best reasonings and inquiries, expressly seem contradictory and impossible. And shall We not believe the *Trinitarian* System, because of some seeming Contradictions, tho' God Almighty should assure Us it is true? What reason can there be for such a Dealing; or how can We reconcile it with our own, avow'd and incontestable, Measures, in many instances?

The Rule of Reason, then, undoubtedly implies; that We are to follow what (after the best search We are capable of) appears the most evident, notwithstanding all the Difficulties which otherwise the greatest Credibility may seem to be attended with; and that there can be nothing more credible, and no greater or surer Evidence, than the assured Testimony of the Infallible God.

Thus We may reconcile together those excellent Directions of Holy Scripture, in *Understanding to be Men, to prove all things, and to judge*, (1 Cor. 10. 15. 1 Thess. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 14. 20.) and yet *not to lean to our own Understanding*. (Prov. 3. 5.) That is, not to stick to our own imperfect Imaginations, but to consider most exactly what Right Reason after the most sincere and careful attention leads Us to, and inviolably to follow that.

The *Unitarians* therefore are unreasonable, to seek any excuse not to believe the *Trinitarian* System, if it be taught in the Word of God. And those *Trinitarians* take more trouble than needs, or than can be effectual, who content not themselves to prove the Doctrine of the Trinity out of the Scripture, but attempt to reconcile it to Reason. There can be nothing more reasonable than to believe, when God speaks, whatever Difficulties our own weak and shallow Imaginations may find in the Subject-Matter of the (otherwise credibly attested) Divine Revelation. But some *Trinitarians*, as well as the *Unitarians*, seem to labour under this Prepossession, that Men are to believe nothing of what God tells Us, unless it can be shewn to be free from all Difficulties, or unless all the Objections be answered that Human Reason can make against it. Let it but be proved that God has said a thing, and then, tho' it be attended with never so great, and many, seeming Contradictions and Impossibilities, it suffices Us to hold that it is a *Mystery*, which We are to believe so far as We can find that God has revealed it. Here it is, most evidently, our reasonable Service, to sacrifice our Human Understanding to Divine Faith. But this is a Point, which the *Unitarians* seem not to have duly considered. Yet they might easily observe, that God has sown Difficulties in most things in this State of Imperfection and Probation, to make Men both humble and diligent or religiously industrious, and to try or manifest who will be sincere and careful in the Momentous Inquiry and Search after the Truth, which incontestably is of the greatest Concernment to Us to weigh as it deserves. The not attending to the right use of Reason herein, is what makes Men not only *Unitarians*, but Deists, and even Atheists. Some will believe no Spirit, because it seems a Contradiction that what is not Material should act upon Matter. They believe no God, but hold the World to be of itself, because they do not conceive that Something can be made out of Nothing, nor are able to imagine how it is possible that what is absolutely Immaterial should produce Matter, and because they do not see or understand with what Tools as well as with what Materials God made the World. And some reject Revelation, on  
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pretence that there are Prophecies in Scripture, and God is in it represented as Concerning himself with Men; whereas if he did so, they think, he would not permit Evil if he could hinder it, and it seems to them to be a Contradiction to fore-see certainly Future Contingencies. This shews Us, that We ought to be truly humble, and not wise in our own conceits, and that if We will not expose our selves to Error, concerning Sublime Matters, We are not rashly to determine those things to be impossible, which to our Reason seem most strange and wonderful. This is the First Branch of the *Trinitarian* Argument. The Second is,

( 2. ) *That the Unitarian Interpretations imply some most unlikely Assertions, and are, besides that, forced and unnatural, and so remote from the obvious Import of the Words that 'tis not to be conceiv'd the generality of Christians can understand the Scripture in that Sense.* The *Unitarians*, to avoid the Difficulties of the *Trinitarian* System, run to other seemingly as great Difficulties. What can, for instance, seem more impossible, than those Assertions, that a Creature can perform the Office of a Creator, (which, at least, one would think, is to set up two Gods, one Superior and one Inferior, besides the Holy Ghost,) or that the most excellent Creature, as like God as possible, and in whom the Fulness of the God-head dwells, can ever need the Assistance and Ministry of Angels, by the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of God, meaning both the Chief and under him the whole Body of Angels; or that, by the Spirit understanding the Divine Power and the essential Virtue and as it were a Property or a Faculty of God, Christ, a Man, and a Creature, should have the Preheminence over it, and be named before it, and be honour'd above it? If these things are unaccountable, what do the *Unitarians* get by their differing from the *Trinitarians*?

Then, the remoteness of the *Unitarian* Interpretations may in particular be argued by these Instances. When the generality of Christians read these Texts, that the Word is God, and that by him all things, whether in Heaven or Earth, were made and created; is it likely that it will come into their minds, that thereby is meant, that all things were New-modelled by Christ, or that supposing that all things were created by him, yet he is but a Creature that bears the Name of God? If these Senses are so far from being obvious, that we may imagine they can scarce so much as enter into the thoughts of any ordinary Christians; is it credible that they are the true Meaning of those Texts? For can We think the Holy Writers have so expressed themselves, as that it should not be possible for the greatest part of Men to understand them? We may then be confident,

( 3. ) *That several Texts of Scripture, whether put together, or taken asunder, amount to a firm Evidence of the Trinitarian Sentiment.* Besides those aforementioned, these seem express, which call Christ by way of eminency the Son of God, and which not only shew that Christ may and is to be Pray'd to, but declare that God will have Men Honour the Son even as they Honour the Father. Which, it seems, after all that the *Unitarians* have said concerning the Worship of the Man Jesus Christ, is an invincible Demonstration that the Son is God, like the Father. In fine, the *Trinitarians* esteem, all these Arguments may also be strength'ned, by the following, and last, proposed Consideration.

( 4. ) *That, it seems, there is no express Text, for the Unitarian Doctrin, or against the Trinitarians.* If the *Unitarians* will confute the *Trinitarian* System, let them

them produce any decisive Text for their Sentiment; thereby they will incontestably shew, that all the Texts, which the *Trinitarians* alledge, must be understood in the *Unitarian* Sense; but this the *Trinitarians* do defy the *Unitarians* to do. This is so weighty a Consideration, that Dr. Sherlock thinks fit to inculcate and repeat it a great many times, in his last Book, intituled, *The Scripture-Proofs of our Saviour's Divinity explain'd*, &c. To this purpose, for instance.

Page, 47. How harsh and unusual soever the Expositions of the *Unitarians* might appear, I should allow them to be very Reasonable, had they first well prov'd, that Christ is but a Creature, [*that is, in the Unitarian Sense,*] and not the eternal and almighty God himself; for that alone would be reason enough to attribute nothing to him, which cannot belong to a Creature.

Page, 50. We must understand Words in a proper and natural Sense, where there is no apparent reason for a Figure; and here is none to take figuratively, as the *Unitarians* do, these words, God, and Son of God, when applied to Christ, unless they think fit to assign his being a mere Creature: Which indeed would be a very good reason, could they prove that Christ is but a Creature.

Page, 55. Could any Text be produced, that proves Christ to be but a Creature, [*that is, the Dr. must mean, as was before remark'd, but such a Creature, as the Unitarians hold, as most eminently acts for God, represents God, and is assisted of and united to God, according to the Unitarian System,*] it would put an end to this Controversy, and either excuse or justify all their other Interpretations of Scripture, how harsh soever they might otherwise appear.

Page, 58. The whole Controversy may be put upon this Issue, if they can confute ours, or establish their own Interpretations of Scripture, so as to prove ours to be necessarily false, and theirs consequently necessarily true, &c.

## C H A P. XL

### *An Answer to the First Branch of the Objection.*

**T**O the Four Branches of the foregoing Argument, the *Unitarians* answer in these Four Particulars.

( 1. ) *The Unitarians do not lay the whole stress of their Cause upon Arguments drawn from Reason; yet, very justly, on the other hand, they think, like all Protestants, that Reason ought not wholly to be slighted.*

( 2. ) *They maintain, that none of their Assertions are incredible, and that their Interpretations are rational, and agreeable to the stile and current of Scripture, and therefore natural and obvious enough.*

( 3. ) *It is possible, and easy, and warrantable, to understand in an Unitarian Sense all the Texts which the Trinitarians alledge for their Sentiment.*

( 4. ) *The Unitarians produce several Texts of Scripture, which seem express and most evident for the Unitarian System, it manifestly appearing that they are not susceptible of any other tolerable Sense, or that they cannot tolerably be reconciled to the Trinitarian Sentiment, so that if Men do not own and discern the force of them, it seems it must be either because they make no attention to them, or because they are moved and acted by Passion, blinded by Prejudice and Partiality, and resolved not to acknowledge the Truth.*

( 1. ) *The Unitarians do not lay the whole stress of their Cause upon Arguments drawn from Reason; yet, very justly, on the other hand, they think, like all Protestants, that Reason ought not wholly to be Slighted. If this Subject be duly consider'd, it will be found that Protestants and Unitarians do not differ in Principles concerning this Question, What Use of Reason ought to be allowed in Matters of Religion? Now if it be so, there can be nothing less pertinent than to make a Dispute about it, or to pretend a Difference where there is none. It is as if a Papist should make long Harangues to Protestants, to prove that Scripture is the Word of God, that God cannot be suppos'd willing to deceive Men, and that therefore we must heartily assent to and firmly believe whatsoever is contain'd in the Bible. Why, Man! What Protestant is there that knows not this, or that denies it? Protestants profess to believe the Holy Scripture, as much, to the full, as any Member of the Church of Rome doth. Pretty, then, make no Controversy about that Matter. But if thou wilt do any thing to the purpose, shew that Protestants reject some Doctrines certainly taught in God's Word. In like manner, Unitarians maintain that a Protestant is out of the way who Quarrels with them about the Use of Reason, and they challenge him to shew that they make any other Use of it than Protestants themselves make in Matters of Religion. So that whenever Protestants Quarrel with the Unitarian Principles with relation to this Point, they deviate from their own Rule, and accuse their own Measures, than which nothing can be more unreasonable and unwarrantable. Either make not Use of the Principle, or Quarrel not at a like Use of it. If, after all, you think, that Unitarians make a different Use of Reason, (I say, a different Use, in Kind, and Extent,) or ascribe more to Reason, than Protestants do; then, in God's Name, shew it, and don't declaim against or invalidate your own Principles; play not at fast and loose, or sometime hold the same Principles of Reason, and anon reject them and dispute against them. This is what the Unitarians answer in general. But more particularly they represent.*

*The Unitarians do not lay the whole stress of their Cause upon Arguments drawn from Reason. For a Proof of this, the Reader may be refer'd to Cress's Book Touching One God the Father, where there are many Arguments from Scripture for one taken from the Topick of Reason.*

*If the Unitarians did not appeal to Scripture, and offered not to put the Controversy upon that Issue, and were not willing to be decided chiefly by that, but propos'd wholly to set the Divine Revelation aside, and resolv'd only to hearken to what Human Reason can inform us of the Matter controverted; the Trinitarians would have some grounds to blame them, and to assert that they gave too much to Reason. But the Unitarians expressly acknowledge, as well as the Trinitarians,*



*unitarians*, both, that Reason's Sphere and Reach is not unlimited, that there are many Truths above Reason and attended with inextricable Difficulties and incumbered with seeming Contradictions, and that therefore what is credibly demonstrated to be is not to be rejected upon the account of such Reason-Objections as these, where Reason is short and doth not see clearly and distinctly; and, then, expressly, the *Unitarians* do hold, that in Matters of Revelation the Holy Scripture is primarily to be consulted, and followed, as the Supreme Rule. What will then the *Trinitarians* have, or what can they require more, and what is there here that they can justly blame? It is true, indeed, that hereby the Use of Reason is not wholly discarded. For,

*On the other Hand, the Unitarians think, like all Protestants, that Reason ought not to be wholly slighted.* For, indeed, what Reason shews clearly and distinctly, no Man in his Senses, that duly considers, will condemn it or reject it. And, in reason, We ought not, lightly, to take any Thing in a Sense, that seems contrary to Reason, when there is no absolute Necessity for it, or when that Thing may be taken in another Sense. It is certain, that *Protestants* allow as much to Reason, and hold that Scripture is to be understood consistently and agreeably to these *Natural Principles*, so that when the Words of Scripture in their literal Signification imply something manifestly contrary to Reason, they must be taken in any other Sense that they may be susceptible of. In short, Protestants doubt not but that the whole Scripture perfectly agrees with Right Reason, and therefore they take it as much as possible in Senses evidently agreeable to Reason, and they expressly reject those Senses which are plainly inconsistent with it. Upon that account, all Protestants hold, that We must necessarily make Use of Reason in interpreting of Scripture, if We will understand it right. Accordingly, they consult and use Reason, both, in expounding the Text of Scripture, and in drawing the natural and necessary Consequences from it. And agreeably to these just Measures, they take in a *Figurative Sense* those Texts, which according to the *Literal Sound* of the Words manifestly appear to our Reason to be unworthy of God and to be expressly contrary to Reason. Upon that account, they understand *figuratively*, for instance, that Saying of our Saviour's, that the Bread of the Eucharist is his Body, and that except We Eat his Flesh and Drink his Blood we cannot have Eternal Life, as also those Expressions which ascribe to God a Body or bodily Parts, the Saying of *Moses* that God laboured and rested, the Term which imports that *Jephtha* Sacrificed his Daughter, &c.

Now the *Unitarians* desire not to make any other Use of Reason. But then they maintain, that by no means they ought to be hindered to make the like Use of it, that *Protestants* so justly do, or so justly plead for, for instance, in the Controversies with the Church of Rome. What Reason shews clearly and distinctly, they esteem, ought not to be unregarded. They hold, therefore, that We are not rashly to understand or interpret Scripture in Senses manifestly contrary to Reason, when (especially) that Scripture appears susceptible of some other Sense. And they affirm, that this is nothing but what is not only most evidently just and rational, but also expressly agreeable to the Protestant Principles and Practice, as has been shewn. So that, We must needs conclude, God surely will not take it ill, but on the contrary He cannot but require, that We should thus reason, or make use of Reason and Consideration, as the

Unitarians here would do, so as to have some regard, and make some inquiry, Whether things agree or disagree with the Common Notions of Human Understanding.

Indeed, where Reason doth not see clearly and distinctly, seeming Difficulties ought not to be looked upon as wholly conclusive; and, most particularly, Difficulties then ought, in reason, to be reck'ned of no weight, against a thing which manifestly or most credibly appears to be. But the Unitarians assert, (as has been shewn in the *Apologia pro Irenico Magno*;) that this is not the Case with the Trinitarian Doctrin. They humbly represent, that the Trinitarians cannot say, that the Doctrin of three Persons in one God is most credible and manifest in it self, nor incontestably express in Scripture. But, the Unitarians assert, on the contrary, it is most clearly and distinctly evident, that that Doctrin is inconsistent with several Texts, as well as implies many most express Contradictions and manifest Impossibilities.

The Trinitarians then have no just grounds, to compare this Point, with some Things that are Incontestable, or absolutely out of our Sight. For tho' the Whole of God cannot be perfectly comprehensible, yet in general some things of God may be clearly discerned, and therefore God is unanimously acknowledg'd in that sense to be an Object of Reason, and all Parties affirm or deny some things of God upon the account of their being evidently agreeable or disagreeable to Reason: There is no reason, consequently, why the same Measures should not be followed, with respect to the Trinitarian Controversy; And plainly then that is very unreasonable which the Trinitarians so earnestly desire, that no account at all should be made of the so many, so express, and so obvious Contradictions and Impossibilities which appear to be implied in the Trinitarian Doctrin. If they were only obscure and uncertain Difficulties, and if the Trinitarian Doctrin were most manifest and certain or unavoidable, and not contradicted by any Scripture-Evidence, the Unitarians would be to blame to insist on this Plea of Reason: But, as was said, the Case will be found to be quite otherwise, if it be duly considered; And if so, the unjust and unreasonable Measures that are taken, will be a Shame to the present, and a Wondering to future Times.

The Arguments of the Trinitarians, in fine, are not infallible, which import, that some certain and incontestable Truths are incumbred with any most express and unavoidable Contradictions. It is certain that some Truths are above Reason to give an account How they are, (and those are true Mysteries,) but it doth not follow that they are contrary to Reason. It were indeed the greatest Folly, upon any Difficulties, to deny any Thing which manifestly appears to be. But if the Manner or the Things concerning those Difficulties were rightly stated & understood, they might appear to be free from Contradictions; for real Contradictions cannot be true. It is Men's rash Judgment, then, that concludes a Truth to be attended with Contradictions, when really it is not so. I doubt not but that those Systems, if duly considered, may be vindicated from Contradictions, which assert, that there is no Vacuum, that Matter is divisible infinitely, that Eternity consists in a perpetual Succession of Moments. It is true We are not to lean too much to our own Understandings, or to be stiff to our Prepossessions & Imaginations without sufficient knowledge of the Cause and without due examination. But then, on the other hand, it is known, We are bid in Understanding to be Men, & to prove all things to the best of our power, that is, those things especially that concern our  
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eternal Welfare. And by that means God tries our Sincerity and our real Concernment for the most momentous Matters. We must not then reject the Use of our Reason.

It is indeed certain, and evident, those are faulty and criminal, who, when Religion and Revelation are so well prov'd and credibly attested and confirmed, dispute either of them, because they do not know how things were created, and with what Instruments God made the World, (as if He needed any,) or because they do not understand how God can foresee Events, and why He permits Evil. No wise Man will agree, that *these Difficulties* expressly imply *unavoidable Contradictions*. And all good Men will grant, that the grossest Solution of these Objections renders the Infidels utterly inexcusable. Now what considering Christian will say, that the said, or any the like, Objections are absolutely unanswerable? The most difficult Objections incontestably are those of *Spinoza* and *Bayle*. Yet we see them answered, the one by the most Reverend Archbishop of Dublin in his Book *De Origine Mali*, and the other by the Famous Dr. *Henry More* in the Second Part of his *Metaphysics*. There are some Answers to those Objections, which need not take up above two Sheets, and to which the Infidels can not reply with the least colour of Reason. As to the rest, the Reader may be referred to the 12th. Chapter of the *Apologia pro Irenico Magno*, which comprises a general Answer to the Objections against the Use of Reason. Yet certainly it is not necessary, that all Difficulties against Religion should expressly be answered. It is undoubtedly sufficient, that it be solidly prov'd, and that it appear most rational and credible. And when we are assured that God says any thing, we may rationally believe it, and ought in reason to do so, notwithstanding any seeming Difficulties, inferior to a stronger and clearer Evidence. Howbeit, on the other hand, that the Inferiority of such Difficulties be most fully evinced, the essaying to resolve Difficulties, as much as possible, ought by no means to be discouraged. For, if things be duly considered, Religion will then be sufficiently vindicated and illustrated; and otherwise it may often be sadly misrepresented and corrupted, as well as wretchedly exposed to the Calumnies of the Infidels.

## C H A P. XII.

### *An Answer to the Second Branch of the Objection*

( 2. ) **T**HE Unitarians maintain, that none of their Assertions are incredible, and that their Interpretations are rational, and agreeable to the stile and current of Scripture, and therefore natural and obvious enough. 'Tis certain, on the one hand, the Trinitarian Tenets are most strange and unintelligible, and, on the other, the Stile of Scripture, like that of all Eastern Languages, is most figurative. Now, (this being duly weighed, and it being withal

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consider'd that *Reason* is a *Divine Light* that ought not wholly to be slighted,) if some constraint is to be made, either to some *Difficult Expressions* that may be taken with the help of a warrantable Figure in an accountable Sense, or to the *Common Notions of Mankind* that cannot be reconcil'd with the literal or first seeming import of those Expressions; what course in this Case is it *most pious and rational* to take? The *Unitarian* Objection it self, (implying that what is incredible is to be rejected,) decides the Matter. The chief Instances, of the pretended Remoteness of the *Unitarian* Interpretations, are particularly concerning the *Unitarian* Expositions of *Christ's Creating all things*; and in what Sense the *Word* is said to be God, &c. Now to the latter the *Unitarians* observe, that, if we will understand that Text aright, we must not determine our selves about the Sense of it before we have considered what the *Scripture* elsewhere teaches, as well as *Reason*, concerning this Person that is here called the *Word*, and that if it appear that thereby a *Creature* is meant, as even according to them it evidently doth, then there can be no difficulty in explaining the Title of God which is attributed to the *Word*, but we must necessarily take it in an *Inferior* Signification, in which it may be applied, and we find it is sometimes in *Scripture* communicated, to a *Creature*, especially our Saviour himself (accordingly) warning us that some *Creatures* in *Scripture* are called Gods, *John*, 10. 34, 35. *Angels* in the *Original* are termed Gods, *Pf.* 8. 5. &c. And it was common among the *Heathens* to give that Title to others beside those whom they accounted the *Supreme Gods*. The giving then of that Title to some *Creature*, in an *Inferiour Sense*, was not at all unintelligible, either to *Jews* or *Gentiles*. Indeed, one of the Designs of *Christianity* was to inform the *Pagans*, that there are not many Gods, in the *supreme or proper Sense* of that word, but only *One such God*, to whom alone *Divine Worship* is due. But the *Gospel* never intended to signify, that there are not many, in *Heaven* and *Earth*, that may be termed Gods in an *inferior Sense*, according to the *Scripture* as well as the *Gentile-Style*. If *St. Thomas* directed his Speech to *Christ* in that exclamation, *My Lord, and My God*; he might mean no more than if he had said, *My Prince, and My Sovereign*! The *Trinitarians* own, that, by the *Word*, in the beginning of *St. John's Gospel*, is meant *Christ*. Now *Reason* it self shews us manifestly, that we must not take *Christ* to be the *Supreme God*. For *Christ* is a *Man*, and was always own'd to be but *one Person*; but *God* is a distinct Spirit, and consequently a distinct Person, for an intelligent Being, whether *Divine* or *Human*, has all that is requisite to the constituting of a Person, and so cannot always but be a distinct Person; two Spirits then must needs be two Persons: And therefore *Christ*, being but *one Person*, and being known to be a *Human Person* or a *Man*, cannot in reason be imagined to be the Most High God. And there cannot be more than *one Person* in *God*, for *God* is always spoken of and to in the *Singular Number* by Pronouns that imply a Person, &c. Now the *Scripture* speaks to us as to *Men*, who are bound to make use of their *Sense* and *Reason*, and for a trial thereof *Figurative Expressions* are sometimes employed. But, besides all the Considerations flowing from the Topick of *Reason*, the *Unitarians*, as is to be observed in the Fourth Particular, shew by divers unanswerable and express Arguments taken out of *Scripture*, that *Christ* is a *Creature*, and is not literally the *God Almighty* himself, but only his Chief Minister and Representative, and the most excellent and most dignified *Creature*, in whom



whom God most extraordinarily and most intimately dwells, and in and by whom God most wonderfully works. And therefore if by *the Word*, in the beginning of St. John's Gospel, should literally be understood God himself, or some Influence of the Divine Nature as it were incarnated with or constantly dwelling in and assisting the Man Christ Jesus, it would not follow, that Christ is literally the Supreme God himself, or that there are more Persons than one in the God-head.

As to the Creation attributed to Christ, it is sufficiently evident it must be understood of such a Creation as a Creature is capable of, if Christ appear to be a Creature. Prophets, God's Creatures and Ministers, are said to do Super-natural Works and raise the Dead, tho' it be not they properly that do such things, but God, by them, at their presence, at their stretching out of their hand, at their word or request, and the like. They do not the Miraculous Work by their mere Strength, or by their own Power, but by a Divine Power thus inherent in them, or annexed to them, accompanying and assisting them, and working at their desire; and yet they, themselves, are said to do the Work. For instance, in *Mat. 10. 8.* Our Saviour bids his Disciples *Heal the Sick, Cleanse the Lepers, Raise the Dead*; and in *John, 14. 12.* he tells them, that they should do most wonderful Works: now, incontestably, that signifies, that God would do those Works by them, or that they should do 'em by God's Assistance, or with the concurrence of the Divine Power working at their desire. In like manner, the First-born might Create the World, or might be said to Create the World; and God might be said to Create the World by him, as it is said that by the Hands of the Apostles were many Signs and Wonders wrought, *Acts 5. 12.* God was pleas'd to work by those Hands, which of themselves were not able to do these Miracles, but were enabled to do them by the concurring Assistance of the Power of God annexed to them or accompanying them. To Raise the Dead, or Cure the Blind, is as well above Natural Power, as to Create the World; tho' to Create the World be more than to Cure the Blind, and tho' a Creature which Creates the World, or which may be said to Create the World, has a greater Concurrence of the Divine Power annexed or united to him, than one that only Cures the Blind. (Howbeit, certainly, a Creature which so represents God, as to be Worshipped with God, tho' but as the most highly dignified Creature possible, must undoubtedly be infinitely more united to the God-head, than one which only doth some Miracles, or than any Prophet or Apostle, before whom 'tis not lawful to bow the Knee, or on whose Name 'tis not lawful to call.) Moreover, we must consider, it is undoubted and most obvious, that often in Scripture by Creating is only meant disposing, or modelling, fashioning, and setting in order. (*Ephes. 2. 10.* and *4. 24. &c.*) There is then not only no reason, why the Creation attributed to Christ (even if it were the First Creation) should not be taken in that Sense; but there may be an absolute necessity it should be so understood, if Christ appear to be a Creature, tho' never so intimately united to the God-head: And, so, that is then obvious enough to those who will diligently attend to the Stile of the Scripture; and it is not God's intentment, that any others should come to the true knowledge of it. (See Bishop Taylor's 2d. Sermon on *Tit. 2. 7.* "He that will understand God's Meaning, must look above and below, and round about, &c.") The Secret of the Lord is with them, who fear him, and who consequently do what they can to know exactly his



Law and reveal'd Will. (Will any say, that there are not some Expressions in Scripture, to be understood in as seemingly a far-fetch'd Sense, as any given by the Unitarians?) If Men mistake when they have done what they well can in their circumstances to be informed aright, it is credible that God will judge that a pitiable Case, so they be humble and moderate, and be not violent, magisterial, and imperious, and do not pretend to impose their Sentiment on others, but be willing in abstruse Matters to unite in the Generality of the Terms of Scripture. In that manner, the most ignorant, not being so thro' their fault, may be safe. But God has not left the Scripture into the hands only of unlearned and unthinking Men, immersed in and mostly taken up with the concerns and business of this Life. Tho' all Christians are bound in some measure to search and meditate upon the Scriptures, God has set up an Order of Men, whose particular Vocation is to assist other Men as much as possible in the right understanding of the Divine Revelation. And surely no possible Means ought to be neglected, which are Subservient to that great end. And if these Means were freely, calmly and impartially us'd, (which would be if Ministers were fairly to represent the Reasons *Pro* and *Con* in Difficult Matters, without deciding, condemning, and imposing,) then all necessary Truths would soon be discern'd, and it would therefore easily be made to appear to all Christians what may be meant by the *Creation attributed to Christ* in Scripture, or how far the understanding of that Point is necessary, and in what Generality this and the like ought to be left.

The Chief Instances, then, which the Trinitarians give, of the pretended incredible Assertions, implied in the Unitarian Expositions, are these: That a Creature could perform the Office of a Creator: And then, That one in whom the Fullness of the God-head dwells, should need the Assistance of Angels; and, on the other hand, That a Creature should be more honourable than, and should have the prebeminence over, and be named before, the Power of God, by the Holy Ghost understanding an Influence of the Divine Power or the Divine Inspiration.

That a Creature could perform the Office of a Creatour. Even at most, upon as good grounds, the Trinitarians might make the same Difficulty, against Men producing other Men, or the Sun causing the Seeds of things to grow unto Perfection and into a beautiful Order. Indeed, the Sun is not properly a Creatour, nor are Men properly Creatours, but they are Instruments in the Hands of the Creatour. God is pleas'd to make use of them, in the effecting of those Works; but, all the while, He concurs with them, as well as prepares the Subject for them: He not only provides the Matter and Means, and endues the Instruments with a fit Capacity, but He also upholds and assists them, and works with as well as by them. In like manner, the Unitarians observe it is not said that *the Word is the Creator* or *Maker*, but that *by him* God made the Universe.

When the Word was created, (or that most excellent Person which is the most express Image of the Divine Wisdom, and is therefore in that sense call'd the Wisdom of God,) the first Being which God then produced, and which, with the Instrumental Concurrence of the Word, He fashioned and perfected, was (according to the most illustrious Unitarians) another very eminent Creature, which not only for distinction-sake, but also for his excellent Perfection and the designation of his

his Office, was called *the Holy Spirit* and *the Power of God*. But tho' *the Word* had a part in the fashioning or modelling of him, or in the medial and instrumental pouring vital or spiritual influences upon him, yet he had so little share in the Work, in comparison of that which God had in it, that not *the Word* himself, but *God* only, is to be reckoned as the *Producer* or *Maker* of that *Holy Spirit*. And for the same reason, God only is called the Author of all the other Creatures, tho' both *the Word* and the *Holy Spirit* had a hand, together with God, in the drawing of them out of the Chaos. God prepared the Chaos, and, having created *the Word*, and by the Word *the Spirit*, by the breathing and moving of the Spirit he gave Motion to other Creatures that were set into a fit Order to that end. Yet all Creatures, and even the *Holy Spirit*, are said to belong to *the Word*, because in the creating of them God designed to Subject them all to *the Word*; and, accordingly, they were all Subjected to him, from the beginning, tho' then so only as Servants are Subject to a Son in his Minority in his Father's House, whereas after Christ's Passion, and Exaltation, they were Subjected to him as to the Master of the House himself, or as to a Son com to Age to whom the Father commits the Government of the House. If by *the Word*, in the beginning of St. John's Gospel, be to be understood not only the First created Spirit, but also a Divine Virtue and Influence united to and assisting that most excellent Creature, it is easy to conceive that *the Word* might be instrumental in Creating the Chaos, or the World out of the Chaos. Howbeit, nothing in Scripture or Reason contradicts the System, implying, that the Chaos is an eternal Emanation of God; that it is a confus'd Mixture of (unactive) Material and Spiritual Natures; that *Creating* is the putting some of them in a certain Motion and Order; that all Spiritual Creatures have a Material Vehicle; that, the Material Vehicle being prepared, God, with what sometimes is called *his Word* & what is called *his Breath*, forces into it some Portion of the Spiritual Nature scattered in the Chaos; that what the Scripture sometimes also calls *the Word*, (that is the Soul of the Messiah,) and the *Holy Spirit*, (thereby then meaning a Creature,) are the largest Portions of the Spiritual Part of the Chaos that God ever put together; and that *the Word* and *Holy Spirit* being created, God made use of them to *Create*, or *Breath* upon, and *Put into a fit Motion and Order*, the rest of the Creatures.

By the *H. Spirit* then (so far as that title may be applied to other beside God) may be understood *the Chief* of the Elect Angels, or of the Seven Archangels, (1 Tim. 5. 21.) which are represented immediately surrounding, & standing before, the Throne of Glory, Rev. 1. 4. Most probably, such a glorious Creature, as incomparably surpasses all the other Archangels in Excellency of Nature, is then primarily to be understood by the *H. Spirit*: Yet it may be also, that the whole Body of Angels *under him*, & consequently every Angel, may sometime be *thereby* meant. For the term, *Holy Spirit*, may be a Collective Word, implying then several Holy Spirits, or all the Holy Angels; every Holy Angel being a Holy and Pure Spirit: And what all the Subordinate Angels do, at the Command of their Chief, is reck'ned as done by him, who (when he has receiv'd the Orders of *the Word*) divides to them their Tasks, and originally is the Holy Spirit, or Holy Angel, by excellency; and, so, in that respect, these Works are represented as performed by One Holy Spirit, and the whole Body of Holy Angels is then reputed as if it were but One Holy Angel; as, in speaking of what is done by Devils, the Scripture mentions but One of those Impure Beings, as if there were but

one such, (*the Evil One, or the Unholy Spirit,*) what all the Devils do being ascribed to their Chief, who Commands and Directs them in all things.

Howbeit, there is no reason why we may not think, that *One Immense Spirit*, next to God and *the Word*, may not be suppos'd to do all that is attributed to the Holy Spirit. For the Excellency of the Holy Spirit may be so great, as to have incomparably greater Powers and Perfections than all the Angels and all other Inferior Creatures put together, and even almost to equal *the Word* except in Dignity. *One Sun* and *One Moon* pour their Influences effectually upon all the Seeds and Creatures in the World. And do we think that God could not frame an excellent Spirit, or two excellent Spirits, so powerful, as to be able to do the like to all Human Spirits on Earth, and to shine upon them all, and enlighten and guide them, and suggest good Motions to them, and watch alone over them, if not with the Concurrence also of other Angels, (which yet cannot be doubted of,) as Spiritual Stars in comparison of those other most excellent Spirits?

Yet all these Holy Spirits are but the disposing *Instruments* and *Ministers* of the *Divine Power*, which, at their working, together works *by* and *with* them. *The Word* has the disposition of the *Divine Power*; of that which is his particular and ordinary Attendant, and even of that which God himself immediately exercises, and of that also the disposition of which is given to the Holy Spirit and to the Angels. For *the Word*, having receiv'd that Privilege, has made the Holy Spirit partaker of a vast Share of the *Divine Power* above all Angels, according to this System. And to every Angel, according to his Station, is alloted likewise by *the Word's* Appointment, Authorized thereunto by God, a certain Portion of the Administration of the *Divine Power*, which always accompanies them, and concurs with them at their Working, and which properly doth the Wonders, or the Chiefest Part of them, in the effecting of Super-natural Works. They are as it were but the *Bearers* of the *Divine Virtue*, or the *Disposers* of it, which God entrusts to them, because in that Employment they reap the glory & delight of Serving God and of being Instrumental in the good of Others. They dispose therefore of that Portion of *Divine Power*, as they dispose of their own Faculties. (That which was alloted to a Prophet, was called *his Spirit*. 2 Kings, 2. 15. and 5. 26. 1 Cor. 5. 3, 4.) But *the Word*, especially since his Exaltation, has the Disposition of the *Divine Power* (as was said) of all the Holy Angels, whom he sends whenever he will on Errands to do what He pleases; and so he is said to have received *the Spirit without Measure*, whereas no Prophet before him had (and that but at sometimes) the Share but of an Angel, or at most the Assistance it may be of two or three Angels and the Power accompanying them or annexed to them. That by the Holy Spirit something like this (*Viz*: some Angel or Angels, together with a certain Concurrence of God's Acting or a certain Influence of the *Divine Power*) is to be understood, and not altogether and expressly God himself or a literally and properly *Divine Person*; is evinced by the Unitarian Arguments in the *Brief History*, in the *Apology for the Irenicum Magnum*, and in *Cress's Book Of one God the Father*.

It is certain, that, in Job, 32. 8. *the Spirit*, and *the Divine Inspiration*, are manifestly put as *Synonyma*, or as Terms that imply and explain one the other; (the Original Words, *Rouak* in the Hebrew, and *Pneuma* in the Greek, being undoubtedly susceptible of that Sense, not only signifying *Spirit*, but properly signifying *Breath*, or *Breathing*, which is likewise the import of *Afflatu*, the Expression, Metaphorically

cally also, us'd, in *Latin*, to imply *Inspiration*, which is represented as a Spiritual Breathing, or a certain Acting of the Divine Power figured by Breathing.) And, on the other hand, in *John*, 1. 32. compared with *John*, 1. 51. *Abs.* 8. 26. 29. 39. *Revel.* 8. 3. compared with *Rom.* 8. 26. and several other Places, the Spirit, and an Angel, or the Angels, (*John*, 1. 51. *Hebr.* 1. 7. compared with *Abs.* 2. 3, 4.) are also put as the same or *synonymous* terms. From whence it seems it follows, that by the Spirit we must understand; the Divine Inspiration carried and communicated by the Means of a Holy Spirit, or Holy Angel; that is to say, an Acting and Influence of the Divine Power communicated to or performed on some Men at the Presence and Acting of an Angel; or which is the same, a Holy Angel, acting, according to the Direction of the Divine Inspiration, and together with the Assistance (and a certain Influence) of the Divine Power.

Thus the Spirit is, both, a Creature, and not a Creature; an Angel, and also the Spiritual Breath of God, or a certain Virtue of God, or an Influence of the Power of God, which is Something belonging to the Father, or a certain Acting of the Father, but appears not, and need not be concluded, and in reason cannot be thought, to be a particular & real Divine Person distinct from the Father: As by the Word is understood, both, the First-Born, (the Word-Bearer, and the Chief of all Creatures,) and a Divine Word, or an Influence of the Father's Wisdom and Divine Nature, dwelling in and as intimately as possible united with the First-Born.

(The Father, according to these Notions, may then truly be said, to be the whole God-head or the only true God, and to know alone all things; but then, by the Influences of his Divine Word & Spirit, he may manifest to others what He pleases, & that when he thinks fit, & properly 'tis not the Father that is Incarnate but his Word; which is agreeable to Scripture as well as Reason. And the Spirit may be said by a Figure, to search the things of God. See *Cress's, Touching One God*, &c. Book, 1. Sect. 3. Chap. 14. And indeed who besides God should know or search the things of God but the Divine Inspiration, or they to whom it is reveal'd by the Divine Inspiration? In the Form of Baptism, and in the Creed, the Word and the Spirit may well be mentioned, after mention made in general of the Father, tho' they be not Divine Persons distinct from the Father, but be certain Influences of the Divine Perfections, or certain Actings of the Father by some Powers or Virtues belonging to his Nature. The Form of Baptism thus implies, that thereby we are Consecrated the Disciples of God, our Father and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Disciples of the Word communicated to Christ who has Redeemed us by his Doctrine and by his Blood, and in fine of the Holy Inspiration also which Confirms the Gospel and Sanctifies the Soul of true Believers. And, in the Creed, we profess this Belief. Evidently, herein is no *Tautology*, nor any thing Superfluous. For the Father and his Influences, or God and the most eminent Actings of his Powers, are things distinct. And those Actings and Influences are not therefore known, tho' the Father be, and tho' they belong to the Father. And tho' they were Necessarily in the Father, it would not be Impertinent to particularize them, after having made mention of the Father. As after having said that there is a Sun, it would not be irrational to add that we believe and know the Sun produceth Light and Heat. Otherwise indeed what could the *Trinitarians* themselves plead, for mentioning the Son and Spirit after the Father, when they hold that the whole Son and Spirit are wholly in the Father, and



that the Father cannot be without them? Now according to our System, the Spirit implying an Influence and an Acting of the Divine Nature, those may well be said to be the Temple of God in whom the Divine Inspiration resides, tho' the Divine Inspiration be not a Person, or not a Person distinct from the Father. Indeed tho' the Divine Inspiration were only the Acting of an Angel commissioned and directed by God, Christians in whom the Inspiration works might then also be truly said to be the Temple of God, and not of the Angel, because the Angel works not for himself or on his own account, but as sent and ordered by God and Christ, and then, according to the *Jewish* Phrase, *Apostolus cujusque est quisque*; as when an Embassador Wedds a Princess in his Master's Name, She is not thereby Married to the Subject, but to the Prince that sent him. And the Angels may be called by way of eminence the Breath of God, inasmuch as they proceed from him, as our Breath doth from us; or most probably inasmuch as they carry the Influence of the Divine Spirit or Power, as *God's-Word Bearer* is called *God's Word* inasmuch as he carries the Commands of God, and both acts by Gods' Power and Wisdom, and represents and exhibits God's Majesty and Authority dwelling in him.)

It has been necessary to make all these Digressions, particularly concerning the Holy Spirit, further to illustrate the *Arian System*, concerning the Holy Spirit's Nature and Person, as well as that of the *Word*, in order to shew most evidently, that tho' the *Word* & the *H. Spirit* were *Instrumental* in the *Creation* of the World, yet the *Arians* need not be understood to make *three Creatours* properly, nor *three Gods*, according to the groundless imputation of the Platonick and Scholastick *Trinitarians*.

Not but that the *Word* might and did from the beginning bear the Title of *God*, in an Inferior Signification, even if it were but inasmuch as he represented God, and commanded in God's stead or in God's Most Supreme Authority to the Highest Creatures next to Him; (to settle which Honour upon him, & extend it in the Highest Degree, and so to continue it to him, in the Oeconomy of the Gospel, God required this Condition of him, that he should freely undertake the Redemption of Mankind; for otherwise Mankind had perished, and consequently the First-Born, tho' he had continued as he was, remaining Innocent, should not have had Men for his Subjects:) Howbeit, the *Arians* do not say that the (created) *Word* is eternal, and infinite, and self-existent, or self-moving, nor consequently that he has all Perfection, or any Perfection and Power, of himself; now, every one knows, this is the Description of him who is *literally and properly God*; and this belongs only to the *Father*, and therefore with the Apostle it may well be said, that tho' there be many who are called *Gods* in Heaven and Earth, yet the *Unitarians* or true *Christians* do hold but *One* who *literally is God*; all, which may be said to be *God*, belonging to the *Father*. Nevertheless, the *Word* not only most eminently Representing God under the Oeconomy of the Gospel, but being most intimately United with the God-head as has been shewn, (an Influence of the *Father's* Divine Virtue constantly dwelling in him, so as to become in a manner Part of his Being,) in that Sense probably he may also bear the Title of *God*, and may very properly do so, tho' there be no other Divine Person but the *Father*.

And *God Almighty*, then, in the said Oeconomy, doing all by the Ministry and by the Mediation, or at the Request and upon the Account, of the *Word*, as also the *Word* doing all in the Name and Power of God, whatsoever the *Word* doth herein is truly censured.



ceived or reputed to be *done by God*, and *what God doth also in that respect* may be said to be *don by the Word*. For Instance. If God directs the *Word* to send one of his Angels on a certain Errand, both God and Christ may be said to have sent that Angel. If God says that *He will com shortly*, meaning in the Person of his *Word* and *Divine Schechina*, it follows, that, tho' Christ says also that *he will com shortly*, yet, God and Christ (the *Word* of God by excellency) need not be confounded together. Which Title, the *Word*, was originally given him, as was intimated, in that he was designed to direct or signify and carry the Commands of God to the Creatures immediately under him, in order to have the Will of God every where notified, and put in execution accordingly. So God says by him, *Let this be don*, and it is don, himself shewing the Example of Obedience, and doing what is incumbent upon him, God having shewn him what is to be don; for, the Matter, for instance, being prepared, and God working first thereupon, the *Word*, then, with the *Divine Assistance*, doth all that he sees the Father do, and he sets the Angels a doing all that they are enabled to perform. And so, in the beginning, the Work was effected, in disposing the Chaos into the Beauty and Order and Regularity of a World, the *Word* being the General under God. And what could be Impossible to such a Creature, assisted of God, as has been said?

It is to be noted, that, not the *Word*, but the *Holy Spirit*, is call'd the *Power of God*; because, since the Creation, it is by the *Ho'y Spirit* that ordinary Miracles are commonly wrought: So that properly or chiefly the Office of the *Word* now especially is to command, and that of the *Holy Spirit* or of the holy Angels is to execute.

After all, there is nothing so express in Scripture, concerning this intricate Subject, but that many may opine that the *Socinian System*, concerning the *Holy Spirit*, or the Manner of the Creation attributed to Christ, may be the truest. Nevertheless, it is certain, several Passages seem very much to favour the *Arian Hypothesis*, and there is nothing in it that is absurd, or in it self incredible and apparently impossible. As to the other Instances, which the *Trinitarians* give, of the pretended unaccountable Assertions held by the *Unitarians*, they are much easier than the former to be accounted for, and have indeed but little difficulty in them.

The next Instance is, That one in whom the Fulness of the Godhead dwells, should need the Assistance of Angels. The Answer to this is, that the *Unitarians* do not say the Godhead needs the Assistance of Angels, but only (for divers reasons, some of which have before been intimated) is pleas'd to make use of their Service. And it cannot become the *Trinitarians* to find this strange, seeing they hold Christ to be personally united with the Deity, and yet they know the Scripture in many Places teaches that the Angels minister to him and are employed by him, an Angel assisted and strengthened and comforted him in his Agony, and when he was apprehended he said that if he would have resisted he would have made use of the Protection of Angels, of whom he might presently have had more than twelve Legions for the asking. It seems indeed unaccountable, that a God Almighty (or a Person that were God Almighty) should employ Angels in his own Defence. But the Indwelling of the Godhead in Christ makes him not properly and literally to be the Almighty God, but only imports that God in every respect illuminates him and assists him, by what

Means

Means He pleases; and as far as is Necessary for the discharge of that most eminent Office, of Redeeming Men, of Declaring and Performing the whole Will of God, Governing the Universe, and at the helm of the World Representing God and Acting in the stead of God. This Indwelling of the Fulness of the Godhead, therefore, hind'ed not but that Christ sometimes might not Know som things, and (when it pleased God, in the time of his humiliation, particularly, when for that while he was for the most part divested of the Glory which he had before the Creation of the World) might have occasion for the Ministry and Assistance of Angels, tho' probably it was he, as was observ'd, who at first assigned to every one of the Angels their Share of the concomitant and concurrent Divine Power, which, especially since his Exaltation, as we have said, they employ according to his Directions.

As to what is in fine pretended, that it seems marvellous, *that a Creature should be named before, and should be said to have the prebeminence over, the Power of God, by the Holy Ghost understanding the Influence of the Divine Power and Divine Inspiration*; it must be remembred, both, that by the Divine Inspiration or Influence of the Divine Power the Unitarians do not understand a Person but a Property or an Act, and that, agreeably to the exprels Doctrine of Scripture, they hold that Christ is made partaker of the Fulness of the Godhead in the manner we have spoken of before, and just now have further specified, so that, for Desiring the Father, he may at any time Dispose of the Divine Power and Inspiration, and doth actually dispoise thereof as is said, according to what he pleases to ask it of God, and therefore the Holy Spirit is represented as proceeding from the Father by the Son, and the Holy Spirit is said to be Christ's. Now it is not strange, that the Disposer should be mentioned before the thing disposed of, as it is in the Form of Baptism. There is then no need to insist any longer upon this. And so we have don with the second Particular, importing that *the Assertions of the Unitarians are not incredible, and that their Interpretations are rational, and agreeable to the stile and current of Scripture, and therefore natural and obvious enough*. And this, together with the following Particular, being considered, the Trinitarian Sentiment will appear to be wholly groundless, and incontestably therefore altogether incredible. For indeed is it likely, that, Christianity for many Ages having been altered in many weighty Points, the present Trinitarian (at least seemingly impossible and contradictory) System has all this while remained the same that it was from the beginning, and by the hands of the Platonists and Scholasticks has passed pure and undefiled?

In Summ. When some Texts seem susceptible of two Senses, *the one* more literal but expressly irrational or contradictory & impossible & manifestly inconsistent with other Passages and the Current of Scripture, and *the other* more strained or figurative but agreeable to the Scripture-Style and reconcileable with Reason; *which* of the two Senses do the generality of Christians and in particular Protestants commonly prefer in their Interpretations? They unanimously hold, as a standing Rule by which the Scripture is to be interpreted that it may be rightly understood, (as was shewn in the last Chapter,) That We are to reject that Sense which is manifestly absurd and inconsistent with exprels Texts, and are then to hold by that which is reconcileable to Reason and Scripture, tho' somewhat more remote from the Sound of the Words. And indeed it would evidently be most unreasonable to follow other Measures. We

ought

ought then, most incontestably, constantly to *prefer* that *Interpretation* which is *consistent with Scripture and Reason*, before that which is *inconsistent with both*. And this Consideration leads Us to the next Particular.

## C H A P. XIII.

### *An Answer to the third Branch of the Objection.*

( 3. ) **I**T is possible, and easy, and warrantable, to understand in an Unitarian Sense all the Texts which the Trinitarians alledge for their Sentiment. To evince the truth of which Proposition, we shall consider those Texts which are mentioned in the *Objection*, and instanced in, as the strongest for the *Anti-Unitarian Cause*; and as for the others, we shall refer the Reader to the *Brief History of the Unitarians*, or ( even ) to *Grotius his Annotations*, but especially to the *Works of the Fratres Poloni*.

The Texts instanced in, for the purpose aforesaid, are those, which either call Christ the Son of God by way of eminency, or shew that Christ may and is to be Pray'd to, and declare that God will have Men honour the Son even as they honour the Father.

As to the Texts, which call Christ the Son of God by way of eminency, an Observation of Dr. Sberlocks will go a great way to give a light into that Matter. These are his words, at Pages 71st and 72d of his Book against the Bishop of Gloucester. That which entitles Creatures to the natural relation of Sonship to God, is to receive their being from God, in the likeness and resemblance of his own Nature: Thus Angels are called the Sons of God, and so is Adam, who was immediately formed by God in his own Image and Likeness; And thus some think that Christ, who was as immediately formed by a Divine Power in the Womb of the Virgin as Adam was of the Dust of the Earth, is for this reason called the Son of God. ( See Luk. 1. 35, where that reason is expressly given of Christ's being call'd the Son of God. )

The Unitarians to this Observation will in particular add, that no Creature was ever made in so great a Likeness and Resemblance of the Divine Nature nor designed to so high a Dignity as Christ was, and that this particularly is the reason why Christ is called the Son of God by way of eminency, besides that He is actually God's Only-Begotten Son, as we did observe from Luk. 1. 35. This is a plain, and a rational, and, after all, an unexceptionable account of the Matter; and therefore what Dr. Sberlock adds thereupon serves only to shew, that the Scholastick or Platonick Trinitarian Sentiment of Christ's Sonship is impossible. For this is certain and undeniable; and yet, if the Platonick or Scholastick Sentiment were true, this could not be allowed of, according to that System, for he says that System implies, that, there being but one Son in Christ, it is Herefy to hold that Christ is the Son of God in any other sense than by an Eternal Generation.

Christ, as we have seen, is called the Only-Begotten Son of God, because he is the only Person whom God caused to be born of a Woman without the help of Man: And in that sense he is God's

God's Only Son, as well as in this respect that he is the only Lord whom God has placed at the head of the Universe, and to whom he has subjected all Creatures; For Sovereigns and Kings are called the Sons of God, (Luk. 1. 32. John 1. 49. &c.) as is shewn in the Introduction of Dr. Patrick's *Witnesses of Christianity*, and this is the Only Sovereign and King who is constituted the Lord of all other created Lords and Kings, in which respect he is like to God, which we have (not well) translated equal to God, as also in respect of the exercise of the Divine Power in working the greatest Miracles whenever he pleased and whenever he will. Some People are apt to imagin, that even God being called the Father, is a valid Proof of more Persons than One in the Divine Nature. But seriously do they think, that the Samaritan Women, and common Soldiers, were acquainted with the Scholastick or Platonick Trinity? Yet these speak of a Son of God, (Mat. 27. 54.) and to the other our Saviour speaks of the Father as of Somewhat intelligible to them. (John 4. 21.) Conclude we then, that by the Father we must understand God the Common Parent of his Creatures, and that by the Son or a Son of God in general we must understand a Child of God, a good Man by excellency, or one extraordinarily belov'd of God. *Act. 4. 27.*

As to the Texts, which are said to shew that Christ is to be Pray'd to; (nothing need absolutely be added to what has been represented by the Unitarians upon this Subject; howbeit, the Reader is to be reminded,) Unitarians give a very fair account of these Texts; for it is evident that those Texts either import that Believers are now denominated by the Name of Christ, and look for Salvation thro' his Redemption and Mediation and plead in that Name with Almighty God in daily Prayers, or else they set forth only the Wishes of zealous Souls in a pious Discourse or Epistle, & not in the Solemnity of a regular Prayer, or they are instances of Men asking some favour of Christ when he was seen present and appear'd to be spoken to, or they may incontestably be interpreted in another Sense than that which they are alledged for; as the 15th. Verse of the 72d. Psalm, which literally is spoken of Solomon, and which in the Version of the Psalms in the Common-Prayer Book is translated, *Prayer shall be made unto him*, but in the Version in the Bible thus, *Prayer shall be made for him*. In a word, no one Text can be produced, expressly requiring, that generally Christians here upon Earth since Christ's Ascension should directly Pray to him in Heaven, & should not fail to do it regularly & constantly.

Indeed, as was said, the Generality of the Unitarians hold that Christ may be Prayed to, tho' not as being expressly or properly God Almighty himself, (Christ, as *Grotius* observes, on Col. 1. 16. being properly a Man), yet as being our Intercessor with God, and as being the Vicegerent of the Universe, and the Mighty Prince, who most eminently represents God, who in the stead of God and next to God commands to all Creatures, who under God disposes of all things and can do all things, in whom God dwells, who is most intimately united with God, and whom God continually directs and assists.

What the Papists groundlessly pretend and assert of the Saints in Heaven, and of the Holy Angels, is incontestably true of Christ. He is our Mediator with God, and, we may think, seeing God dwells in him, he sees in God all things necessary for him to know. Howbeit, undoubtably, it is sufficient to Pray in his Name to God; because,

cause, in so doing, we recommend the subject of our Prayers to him, founding all our Expectations on the Acceptableness of his Mediation with God; and, at the same time, we discharge our Duty to God, acknowledging that our Mediator and Mediator King holds all his Power and Sovereignty in Subordination to God, and from God's Bounty and Munificence. (*The Lords Supper* is a Feast upon Christ's Sacrifice, a Commemorating of it with Thankfulness, and a Renewing of our Engagements in the Gospel-Covenant with Almighty God, in order to our partaking of the Merit of Christ's Death, which we humbly present to and plead with God in that Holy Solemnity. But this doth not necessarily imply a direct & proper Worship of or Prayer to Christ, but only a Religious Address to God thro' Jesus Christ. *The Feasts upon the Sacrifices* were Common both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; but they did not imply an Adoration of or Prayer to the Victim that had been offer'd. Here indeed it would undoubtedly be most proper to Sing Hymns in Praise of Christ; but it is certain this Solemn Festival doth not absolutely require express Prayers to Christ.) There being then no express Injunction for Men directly and constantly to Pray to Christ, and certainly therefore it being not absolutely necessary, it follows that in our *Terms of Communion* we may content our selves to direct the Body or Current of our Prayers to God in the Name and thro' the Mediation of Christ, and to address a few short Ejaculations to Christ as has been said. And thereby certainly We both make that Distinction betwixt God and Christ that is to be made, and acquit our selves of our Duty to each of them in this Matter. For hereby we acknowledg the Father to be the Chief Director, the Fountain of Wisdom and Power and Honour, the Eternal Lord, of himself God and King, and always sitting the most Supreme at the helm, and most principally steering the Universe; and we acknowledg the Son to be both our Mediator with God, and the Associate to the Empire of Heaven and Earth, or the Universal Governor under God, and constituted King of Men and Angels, commanding to and disposing of all Creatures, as he is directed by the Divine Wisdom, and assisted by the Divine Power, dwelling in him, annexed to him, and intimately united with his Soul or Spirit.

No more can be shewn to be requir'd of us. And it cannot but be very unreasonable to find fault with the Unitarians, for this Worship which they pay to our Lord Jesus Christ; or to declaim against them, as Idolaters, for serving such a Creature, and putting their trust in such a Man.

It is evident, the Unitarians do not look on our Lord Jesus Christ as a mere Man; and they have good reason to esteem him as a Creature that is Able to Save, seeing the Scripture represents him as such a Creature as is sufficiently endued with Divine Power to that end.

And do not the Trinitarians believe Christ to be such a Creature? Do they not believe Christ to be a Man? Do they not confess, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh? (1 John, 4. 3.) That this Jesus was a Man approved of God, by Miracles; which God did by him? (Acts, 2. 22.) That this Man, Jesus Christ the Righteous, (1 John, 2. 2.) was set forth to be a Propitiation, (Rom. 3. 25.) bare our Sins in his own Body, (1 Pet. 2. 24.) and shed for us upon the Cross his most Innocent Blood, thro' which we have Redemption, (Ephes. 1. 7.) by which we are redeemed to God, (Revel. 5. 9.) and by which we are washed, (Revel. 1. 5.) and sanctified?



ed? (*Heb.* 13. 12.) Do they not believe, that this Man, after he had offered that Sacrifice, sat down at the Right Hand of God? (*Heb.* 10. 12.) That him, who was Slain and who Hanged on a Tree and whom God Raised from the Dead, has God Exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour? (*Acts.* 5. 31.) That this Man, because he continueth for ever, has an unchangeable Priest-hood; wherefore he is Able also to Save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them? (*Heb.* 7. 24, 25.) That thro' this Man is Preached the Forgiveness of Sins? (*Acts.* 13. 38.) That, having been Obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross, therefore God has given him a Name which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should Bow? (*Phil.* 2. 9, 10.) Do not the Trinitarians believe, that as the first Man Adam was made a living Soul, so the Second Man, the last Adam, who was formed by God and had God only for his Father, has been made a quickning Spirit, Power thus having been committed to him to raise the Dead and do all that God doth? (*1 Cor.* 15. 45.) Do they not, in fine, know, that God will judge the World in righteousness, by that Man? (*Acts.* 17. 31.)

And will the Trinitarians renounce that Man, their Saviour; and reject their Lord, their Judge, their Redeemer? Will they slight *this* Man, will they not honour him, whom God has appointed to reign with himself, whom the Angels worship, and who, because he was Slain, has been accounted worthy to receive Power, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing? (*Revel.* 5. 12.)

If they think it not unfit, to honour *this* Man, to reverence *this* Man, to bow the knee to *this* Man, as God has appointed it; then they serve a Creature, and worship a Creature, and consequently use an Inferior religious Worship, as well as the Unitarians. Let them not slander the Unitarians, then, for thus acting; and let them not impute it to them as a fault, *thus* to honour the Man Jesus Christ, to the Glory of the Father, who could make such an Excellent Creature as this, and could so highly Dignify and Exalt that Creature.

The Children of Israel at the same time worshipped God and King David, and were blameless. (*1 Chron.* 29. 20.) And shall Christians be blamed for worshipping God and the King whom God has set over the Universe, when Men every Day fall down before Earthly Kings and ask Petitions of them?

The Unitarians worship the Lord Jesus Christ as *such a King*, to the Glory and Religious Service of God; not barely as a King, but as such a one to whom all Power is given in Heaven and Earth, (*Matt.* 28. 18.) Would you then think it unfit, to call upon *such a Prince*, or to ask Grace and Salvation of Him, for the sake of his precious Death and Passion? Or do you think that He, to whom all Power is given, and the Spirit without measure, and in whom the Father most intimately dwells, is not able to know your Wants and to hear your Requests? To worship Christ, is then in some measure to worship God; since Christ not only is a God, or Sovereign, the King of Heaven and Earth under God, and not only acts most eminently for God, so as most eminently to represent God; but Christ is the true *Schechina*, the Divine Nature constantly dwells in him, and all Power is given unto him; He is then honoured to the Glory of God, by God's Order, and (so) God, as was said, is worshipped in him: There is then but one God, properly, that is religiously worshipped, tho' Christ be

be called God, and be worshiped to the Glory of God. (In all the Dominions of Great Britain and Ireland, there is but one Sovereign, tho' a Subject in the Isle of Man bears also the Title of Sovereign, and tho' the Viceroy in Ireland represents the Sovereign and be honoured as the Sovereign.)

Indeed the Unitarians that did not Pray at all to Christ, when they own'd him to be the Governor of the World under God, had not sufficiently weighed the last quoted Text, of Mat. 28. 18. (where all Power is said to have been given to Christ,) nor had fully consider'd, that the Father, who dwelleth in Christ, can enable him to do all things, and that, therefore, now at least, Christ is such an excellent Creature, (as the Arians hold him to have been from the beginning, namely,) as has, himself, incomparably more Perfections and Power, than all the other Creatures together. They needed then no more have doubted that Christ can Know and Supply the Needs of Men, in the Rank and Order that He is set, than they would have question'd that a Mother can Take care of her Family. I know not therefore that there be now any Unitarian, that do not Pray to and Worship (the Saviour of the World, the Lord of Men & Angels,) the Man Jesus Christ, *in the manner I have specified, namely, in a subordinate degree to God, honouring him as the King of the Universe under God, & as he, that governs & disposes all things under God's Direction, as well as mediates for Men & intercedes with God, who is still to be held and ever must necessarily be lookt upon as the Supream.* (Unitarians then can no more be accounted Idolaters for thus worshipping Christ, than Irish-Men can be said to be Rebels for honouring their Viceroy as they do.)

Christ then being thus Call'd upon, nothing is ascribed to him that is inconsistent with the Unity of God; a Man is not Worshipp'd as God, but as assisted of God, and most highly exalted by God; and Trust is not put in a mere Creature, but in one abundantly assisted of the Divine Nature: That is, therefore, ultimately and properly, to put our Trust in the God-head dwelling in Christ. And the Unitarians account the Worship of Christ a Religious Worship, no otherwise than as it is intended and appointed to the Glory of the Father, as Christ acts for God at the Helm of the Universe, and as the Divine Nature assists him, dwells in him, is as intimately united with him as possible, and is made in a manner Part of his Being.

And is it not thus, that the Trinitarians themselves adore God, and worship Christ? (And then where is the Great Difference, or the Great Fault and Defect of the Unitarian System?) Would they adore God, as the Human Nature of Christ? Or would they (the Trinitarians) worship Christ's Human Nature, as God? The Unitarians worship or honour the Man Jesus Christ, as the most Dignified Creature, and as most intimately United to God; and God, as the Supream Being. The Trinitarians cannot reasonably do otherwise. And they cannot deny, that to honour Christ, (as has been said the Unitarians do,) is to honour God, and not to give his Glory to Another. Indeed, to honour a Being that God has not appointed to be honoured, is to dishonour God. But, incontestably, to honour one whom God has commanded us to honour, to the Glory of God; is to glorify and serve God in that Particular, and so to worship God: And God, dwelling in Christ, as he doth, as has been shewn, is honoured and worshipp'd in Christ, by his own Appointment, as already said.

As to John, 5. 23. declaring it to be the Will of God, That Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; an Equality of Honour is no more necessa-

rily to be imagined to be intended and required here, than an Equality of Perfection in those Words, *Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect*, Mar. 5, 48, or an Equality of Fear and Trembling before mortal and earthly Masters as before the King of Men and Angels in this Text, *Servants be Obedient to them that are your Masters according to the Flesh, with Fear and Trembling, in Singleness of your Heart, as unto Christ*. Ephes. 6. 5.

The Sense of this Verse of the 6th. of the *Ephesians* is, that as we would stand in awe before the King of Kings, so, in proportion of the Subordination, Servants ought to demean themselves before their Masters. The Sense of the Text of the 5th. of *St. Mathew* is, that as God is truly perfect, so we ought effectually to strive to be perfect with that Perfection which our Natures are capable of. And, in like manner, the Sense of the 23d. Vers. of the 5th. of *St. John* is, that as we honour God, we must also honour his Deputy & Vicegerent, tho' nevertheless the one as (properly) God's Chief Minister, as was said, & the other as (expressly) the Almighty himself. The Kings of *England* may use the same Phrase, to declare it their Will & Pleasure, *That the Subjects in Ireland should honour the Viceroy, even as they honour the King*. But that doth not imply, that the one must absolutely be taken for the other, & consequently that is not to give the Supreme Royal Glory itself to the Viceroy, no more than to honour Christ is to give expressly God's Supreme Glory to Another, as the *Arians* do well observe, besides that the Saying that God will not give his Glory to Another, may signify, that He will not give it to be dispos'd of, (that He will not give the disposition of it to Another, or that He will not give to Another that Glory which is peculiar to Him of disposing of religious Honour, and appointing Rites of Religion,) or that He will not give or impart a Sublime (Heavenly) Honour to Strangers or Aliens from Him, neither will give his Praise to Idols, that is, He will not patiently suffer, or allow, that Men should make to themselves Objects of Religious Service at their Pleasure like the Heathens, & that the Religious Worship which is properly & ultimately due to Him should be paid to Unfit Beings, to Stocks & Stones or to Dæmons, which are not truly (in any, holy, scriptural, sense) Gods, being neither the Supreme God, nor Sovereign Officers of God, commissioned with Power & Authority thus to act for God, so as most eminently to represent God, and, so, to receive a Suitable Honour, appointed to terminate ultimately to God: So that God then doth not give properly the Religious Honour to Another, tho' He commands us to bow the Knee to the Man Jesus Christ, as we do to God. If He pleased, He might set Angels over Us, or any Good Spirits, and command Us to bow to them, and ask and receive Graces of them, tho' his Holy Nature cannot permit him to give any such Glory to his Enemies, or ever to allow that Impure Spirits be sought to and revered. That could not redound to God's Glory, or the Good of his Creatures; whereas the other might. (See a Passage of *St. Gregory's*, quoted in the 1st. Part of *Bishop Taylor's Sermon*, on *Ps. 86. 5.* where *St. Gregory* observes, that Angels were Worshipped under the Old Testament. But, if so, yet, to be sure, not only that was not a Divine Worship, but even that Worship, so far as it extended, was for the sake of, and terminated to, God, whose Immediate and Highest Officers and Messengers the Angels then appeared to be; and, so, that hindred not but it might truly be said, that God alone was properly Worshipped.) The Text, *Gal. 4. 8.* which we translate doing Service to them which By Nature are no Gods, may be

be translated, *doing Service to them which TRUELY are no Gods*, ( yet it is the same, if we read, *Of their Nature*,) whether *Supreme*, according to the proper and eminent sense of the word, or *Inferiour*, of *God's creating and constituting*, according to the Scripture-Style. See *Grotius* on the Place. Certainly, we are expressly Comanded in Scripture, *to Serve the Man Jesus Christ* (*Phil. 2. 9.*) Yet, incontestably, the Man Jesus Christ properly is a God but in an *inferiour sense*. We are then, without doubt, to serve the Man Jesus Christ as *such a God, appointed and dignified* by the Supreme and Eternal God, (*Act. 2. 36.*) and we are to serve the Supreme God, as absolutely being the Supreme God, or as Him who is of himself God and who (consequently) is God in the most proper and eminent sense of that word.

Howbeit, this doth not imply that Christ is not as intimately united with the Divine Nature as possible. For all Power is given him in Heaven and Earth, and, acting for God in the highest Post, he represents God at the Helm of the Universe. But a Creature cannot thus represent God, and govern the World, and have all Power given it; except God be with it, and assist and direct it, so as that that Creature have the enjoyment and disposition of the Divine Nature as of it's own Being, whereby it's Power and Understanding being enlarged it may in a high measure Know and Act as God. And accordingly, as *Sandius* observes, the *Unitarians* held, from the Beginning of Christianity, that an Influence of the Divine Nature was incarnated in and most strictly united with the Man Christ Jesus. So that Christ is not Worshipped, neither is God's Representative, or the Father's Universal Vicegerent, merely as he is a Creature. A mere Creature cannot comprehend in it's Thoughts and under it's Care the whole Universe, and can never be such a Representative of the Father's at the Helm of the Universal Government. Nor can a mere Creature be Worshipped by all the Creatures in the Universe, as Christ by God's Appointment is to be. It seems, God neither can nor will be thus represented by any Creature as a Creature. Christ then is God's Representative, and is Worshipped, in his Mediatory Kingdom over the whole Universe, Inasmuch as an Influence of the Divine Nature most intimately Dwells in him, Assists and Directs him, and Worketh in and by him, and Inasmuch as the Divine Majesty is Conspicuous in him, and As by his Intercession and by the Merit of his Death and the Virtue of the Covenant of Grace and of his Union with God and his Exaltation he Disposes of the Divine Power in the Gospel-Oeconomy.

A mere Creature may have a vast Honor and Power; but not like that which appears in Christ in his Government of the Universe. Whereas God has given us two Eyes whereby we may perceive three or four Objects at a time at a certain distance, and two Ears which may imperfectly discern some few (several) Sounds also at the same time as the Sounds of certain (several) Voices and of some Instruments, and two Hands by which we may take hold of several Particles of Matter and strike ten Strings at a time and move a certain Mass and steer a Ship, and but a narrow Understanding according to the present Needs and the Capacity of our bodily Organs; God might give a freer Carrier to our Spirits, and endue us with more noble and vaster Capacities, and give us two hundred or two hundred thousand Hands and Ears and Eyes, and enable our Souls to use them all fitly in reference to so many several Objects in the same instant, and consequently vastly enlarge

large the Natural Understanding in order to it's forming at the same time so many Thoughts and Conceptions. It may be that an Angel, or a Human Soul, in a Spiritual Body, has greater Capacities than we conceive, and is all Hands and Eyes and Ears and Tongues, and can clearly discern and hear and discourse and act upon a whole Nation. But, after all, a finite Creature, with the mere Strength of a Creature, cannot comprehend the Universe. Therefore an Angel or a Human Spirit cannot have all Power given him, except God be with and in him in the manner aforesaid.

Likewise, God may set up particular Kings in particular Places, and give them vast Dominions, and oblige their Subjects to be uncovered in their Presence and to bow the knee before them. But, in order that *at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of Things in Heaven and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth*, and that Christ may be enabled to receive these Homages and to govern the Universe and dispose fitly of all Creatures; it is necessary that the Divine Majesty and Power and Wisdom be with and in this Man in the manner aforesaid.

Thus all the Lines of a Circle terminate to an individual Point in the Center. A Spider, circumscribed by and fixed in a Place, reaches of its self no further than that Place; but when it has weaved it's Web, it may by the Means of those wonderful Threads act at a Distance from it's self and above it's own Power. A Man with a Telescope pierces the Skies, and discovers undiscerned Stars. All this and infinitely more is the Divinity to the Man Jesus Christ. He is in the Center of God, and the Godhead is to him an infinite Circle, all the Lines whereof as far as is necessary act upon him and uphold him, and so he acts thereby. The Influence of the Divine Nature, dwelling in Christ, and extending it self all over the Universe, is the mighty Telescope whereby Christ sees all things, and the infinite Web by which he is enabled to act every where. And this acting is to be ascribed to him, as well as to God, or the Father, and to him, in this respect, primarily, or chiefly, inasmuch as God doth all things, in the Christian Oeconomy, upon Christ's Account, and at his Desire. Indeed, Christ wills nothing but what God wills: But, then, God is pleas'd and willing now to do many things for the Sake of Christ, and through his Mediation, which He would not have done, if it had not been for his Undertaking, and his free and wonderful Condescension and Humiliation for the Race of Mankind, and the Merit of his Death, and the Covenant of Grace purchased by his Blood, and his continual Intercession at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Thus, God and Christ are to be considered, and sought to, and honoured, and worshipped; and the Distinction, that is to be made between them, is evident. God is of himself God, and his Dominion is ever the most Supreme, and thus He is to be Worshipped. And Christ receives all things of God, and his Kingdom is a Mediatory Kingdom, and he is thus to be Worshipped. And this is the *Primitive and Scriptural* Notion of Christ's Divinity.

The Heathens were particularly Criminal in these 3 respects. (1.) They set up, of their own Heads and without any Warrant or Command, some Mediators and some Symbols and *Sebechinas*, which they worshipped, with likewise devised & strange Rites, and they made the Chiefest Part of their Religion to consist in the Worship of these, they had such a vast Number of them. (2.) They set up many Supreme Gods. Yet (3.) They passed by the true God, and worshipped Creatures, and many of them Most



Vicious & Wicked Creatures, for their *Supreme Gods*. Which is the Meaning of *Gal. 4, 8.* and *Rom. 1, 25.* Whereby Religion became perfectly corrupted and unfit to purify Men, and actually did as much harm as it was designed to do good. Wherefore God would be own'd for the *Only true God*, and requir'd to be *Serv'd* and *Obe'y'd* as such, & (so) willed that Men should not introduce any thing in his Service, but what they had express Warrant for, from Him, either by the Light of Nature or the Light of Positive Revelation. And that is the Meaning of *Deut. 6, 13.* and *Matth. 4, 10.* But all this hinders not, but that, tho' God is the *Only Absolute and Independent Being* who *Only* is to be *Served* as such and who *Only* is to be *Worshipped* with *Ultimate* or *Divine Worship* and who *Only* is the *Fountain of Honour* so that *None* besides Him ought to be *Honoured* but *Those* whom He *Honours*, yet, for all that, Others, besides God, may, when God pleases, be *Served* and *Honoured*, in an *Inferiour Degree*, *Relatively* and in *Obedience* to God, and so to his *Glory*, and He may appoint a *Mediator* thro' whom We may come to Him. *Ephes. 2, 18.* *John 20, 31,* *Phil. 2, 11.* *God requiring it in order to his Glory*, and so it being done to that intent, that is actually to glorify God, and so is not to give his Glory to Another but to Himself, Himself Only being ultimately served thereby. See the (aforequoted) 18th Chap. of the 5th Book of *Limborch's Theologia Christiana*, §. 10. and an *Unitarian Pamphlet*, intitled, *A Vindication of the Worship of the Lord Jesus Christ*, P. 23, &c. We may then incontestably *Serve* and *Honour* our Lord *Jesus Christ* as our *Mediator* and *Mediatary King*, as was said, tho' God *Only* is to be *Served* and *Honoured* as the *Most Supreme* and as the *Eternal Fountain of Honour*.

At the 11. Ve. of the 2. Ch. of the *Phil.* as we have intimated, the Apostle shews expressly how that Matter ought to be distinguished, when he says, that it is God's Will we should honour and worship our Saviour, and subject our selves to him, and own him as our Lord, viz. to the *Glory of God the Father*. So that, as was said, it is evident, the Honour we are to give to Christ, is a *Mediatary or Inferiour Honour*, and is not ultimately to terminate on him, but on the Father, for whole Sake and at whose Command the said Honour is paid. Howbeit, tho' the *Worship of Christ* be not properly the *Most Supreme*, yet it may be termed a *Divine Worship*, in that Sense that Christ is said to be *God*. (We must needs then observe, with *St. Hilary*, concerning the difficult or figurative Expressions of Scripture, that they are to be understood with Reason, or in a reasonable sense. *Verba non Sono sed Sensu sapiunt.* Thus we may understand, how Christ is God, how we are to Call upon his Name, and how he is to be *Worshipped*.) All *Sovereigns* are jealous of their Honour; the *Sovereigns of Great Britain* would not endure that Who would of their Subjects should have Guards, or should be served *Kneeling*: Yet they freely allow it to their *Lieutenant or Deputy*, because the *Glory* of it terminates to them. For tho' the *Lord Lieutenant* be honoured with a *like Honour* with the *Sovereign*, yet it is paid him particularly upon the *Sovereign's Account*, in Honour to Him, and in Obedience to his Commands who has so appointed it. And thus the Scripture teaches We are to Honour our Lord *Jesus Christ*, as one to and upon whom the highest *Dignity, Glory and Power*, that can be bestowed upon one in Commission, has been in that manner confer'd and granted, Namely, to the *Glory of the Donor and Disposer of it*. And this leads us to the last Particular, that we have undertaken to speak to, which is this.

## C H A P. XIV.

*An Answer to the fourth Branch of the Objection.*

( 4. ) **T**H E Unitarians produce several Texts of Scripture, which seem most expreſs and evident for the Unitarian System. I ſhall here mention but theſe few, referring the Reader, for the reſt, to the *Apologia pro Irenico Magno*, or to *Crell's Treatiſe Touching one God the Father*, in which Books may be found Several of the moſt ſelect Arguments out of Scripture, beſides alſo ſeveral taken from the incontestable Principles of *Reason*, all which of both ſorts are there fully enlarg'd upon, and do ſeem manifeſtly and unanſwerably to evince the truth of the Unitarian Doctrin.

I. The firſt Argument I ſhall mention, ſhall be the laſt quoted Paſſage of the 2d Chap. of the *Philippians*, where the Apoſtle declares, that We are to own Jeſus Chriſt as one exalted and made Lord, and that we are thus to honour him, *to the Glory of God the Father*: So that, as was ſaid, the Honour we are to pay to Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is not to terminate ultimately on him, but on the Father, for whoſe Sake and at whoſe Command the ſaid Honour is given to *the Lord Chriſt*, upon the account of his Exaltation as the inſtimable Reward of his Obedience, and upon the account of the moſt High Commiſſion granted to him by God. Now who doth not ſee, that this invincibly demonſtrates, that properly Chriſt is not *God himſelf*: For if he were literally God Almighty himſelf, it would be abſurd, not to adore and honour him for himſelf ultimately; for that would imply, that the Divine Nature is not to be honour'd for it's own ſake. It were in vain to alledg, that the *Trinitarians* hold the Son has received his Divine Nature from the Father, & that ſo they may alſo worſhip him to the Glory of the Father. They ſay, that the Son had the Divine Nature eternally, and not by a free Gift, but by abſolute Neceſſity, and that it is the ſame numerical Divine Nature and Eſſence with that of the Father, ſo that he is as much God, and is as neceſſarily ſo, as the Father; from which Principles therefore it would need follow, that the Son ſhould be honour'd ultimately for himſelf, or, which is the ſame, ſhould be honoured with properly Divine Honour, as well as the Father. Then, if things had been ſo, the Apoſtle ſhould have ſaid, We muſt honour Chriſt's Human Nature, or the Man Chriſt Jeſus, *to the Glory of God the Son*. But the Apoſtle doth not preſent us with any ſuch Notions. But he tells us, that Jeſus Chriſt is to be own'd as a Lord, and the greateſt Lord, under God, and is thus to be honoured, *to the Glory of God the Father*. What can be more expreſs? If the Son be literally God Almighty, he cannot be exalted any higher, and he muſt needs be honoured ultimately for himſelf, with (Supreme) Divine Honour. But, ſays the Apoſtle, *the Father exalted him*, &c. Whereas, if the Son had been himſelf literally God, his whole Perſon muſt needs have ſat neceſſarily at the Helm of the Univerſe, as well as the Perſon of the Father, and it could not have been otherwiſe, except a Divine Perſon could have ceaſed to be properly Divine, that is to ſay, except God could have been annihilated. Now, the Reader may pleaſe to make an application of  
this,

this, as well as the following Arguments, to Dr. Sherlock's Rule, mentioned before, and by which he owns this Controversy is to be tried.

II. The Second Argument shall be that, which the Dr. at the 197th and following Pages of his Book, intituled, *The Scripture Proofs of our Saviour's Divinity explained and vindicated*, has carefully pointed out to us; and taken great pains to prepare for us, and make us sensible of it's great weight. And indeed it seems a most exprets and decisive Argument. It is that which is grounded on the 36th Verse of the 24th Chap. of St. Matthew, to which the 32d Verse of the 13th of St. Mark is parallel; the import whereof is, *That, Christ declaring he did not know what God knew. Name'y, when should be the Day of Judgement, it follows necessarily and most manifestly that he is not God himself.*

The Dr. in the Place aforequoted, represents the force of the Argument in these words. "There is an obvious Objection against the perfect intuitive Knowledge of our Saviour, from what he himself tells us concerning the Destruction of Jerusalem, &c.—For were he true and perfect God, of the same Substance with his Father, he could be ignorant of nothing.

Now how doth the Dr. solve this Objection, as he calls it? "The common Answer to this," says he, "is, by distinguishing between the Knowledge of Christ, as God, and as Man: That tho' as God he knew all things, yet there were some Secrets for some time concealed from his Human Nature.

Well! Doth the Dr. know of some better Solution? No. Is he then very well satisfied with this common Answer? No. He neither likes this, nor can tell what to say more satisfactory. These are his words. "The common Answer to this, is, &c. as was said in the foregoing Paragraph: "And this," says he, "must be the true Answer, or I know not how we shall find a better; and yet it seems very hard, that the Son, who is but one Person, tho' he have two Natures, should be said not to know that, which he did know; whether he knew it as God, or as Man. This I confess is a Difficulty, and always will be so, while we know so little of this Personal Union," that is to say, of the Union of the Godhead with the Man Christ Jesus. But then, Dr! if we know so little of it, why do you call it a Personal Union, and that of an eternal Son, or an eternal Person, with the Spirit of Christ? But since you are pleas'd to call it so, you must stand to it, and must not pretend to evade, by saying you know not how far it goes, or what communications the Human Nature of Christ receives from its Union with the Godhead. This is not the Point, nor is it at all to the business in hand, from which you ought by no means to be suffered now to flinch away, when it manifestly appears to be against you and invincibly shews the solidity of the Unitarian Sentiment. For you have said, and the Trinitarian System expressly asserts, that the whole Son is but one Person, and therefore, tho' you know not exactly how great are the Communications of the several Parts betwixt themselves, which constitute this one Person, yet you must own that those Communications must needs go so far as to make of it but one Person. (Even all that pass for Orthodox, among the Trinitarians, acknowledge, that Christ is but one Person and but one Son.) Now the business is to consider, Whether any thing can be in general terms denied of one Son, or of one Person, which yet is true of some Part of that Person? And the Unitarians maintain, that, upon the considering of it, this ought not to be found a mere Difficulty against the Trinitari-

an System, but an *irrefragable Argument* of the truth of the System of the Unitarians.

The two following Considerations are the utmost that the Dr. offers, in order, as he says, to give a light to this Matter ; in so much that if both of them are invalid to solve the Difficulty, it will appear that the *Unitarian Argument* is demonstrative and irresistible.

1. The first Reflection is this. That, " notwithstanding the Union, the Divine and Human Natures are two distinct Natures in Christ ; and therefore he may be ignorant of that as Man, which he knows as God. Now supposing that Possible with the Dr. yet this makes nothing at all to the purpose of the *Trinitarians*, except our Saviour had thus expressed himself : The Son, as Man, does not know that thing which you desire him to inform you of, and therefore, as Man, he cannot inform you of it, and, as God, he will not tell it you, tho' as God he knows it very well. But every one, who can read our Saviour's words in the Evangelists, may soon see whether they bear any such distinction.

2. The 2d. Reflection, more to the purpose, is, That the God incarnate, that is to say, Christ, " being but one Person, whatever belongs to either Nature, may truly be affirmed of his Person, with respect to that Nature to which it belongs, tho' it be not true of him, with respect to his other Nature ; and, thus, therefore, (infers the Dr.) if Christ, as Man, was ignorant of any thing, which he knew as God, he might truly be said, not to know, what he did not know as Man : " this (says the Dr.) is universally owned. " Now, Dr. this is a gross Mistake, and, most notoriously, your inference is absolutely wrong, and is so far from being universally owned, that it is indeed owned by no body in the World that considers, but the contrary is held by all Men.

It is true, that *what belongs to any Part of a Person*, may be affirmed of that Person, with respect to that Part to which it belongs, tho' it be not true of him, with respect to his other Parts. For instance. If a Man be *Wounded in the Arm*, it may truly be said of *that Man*, that *he is Wounded*, tho' he be not Wounded in the Head nor Legg. In like manner. If Christ be both the Supreme God and a Man, Personally-United, he may be said in general to know that, which he knows as God, tho' as Man he know not that thing.

But because what belongs to any one certain Part of a Person, may be affirmed of that Person, with respect to that Part to which it belongs, tho' it be not true of him with respect to his other Parts ; it doth not follow, that *what doth not belong to one certain Part of him*, may in general terms be denied of his Person, when yet it truly belongs to some other Part of him. That is so far from being to be inferred from the former way of speaking, that every one knows it to be false, that what truly belongs to one Part of a Person, may in general terms be denied of that Person, upon the account that it belongs not to some other Part of his. Tho' a Man be not Wounded in the Head or Legg, it will not, in general terms, be said that he is not Wounded, when actually he is Wounded in the Arm. Such a denial, upon this mental reservation that the Man is not Wounded in the Legg, would be looked upon as a shameful Equivocation & an express Lye. And would the Dr. ascribe to his Saviour such a way of reasoning, when he makes him deny his knowing, what yet, according to the *Trinitarian System*, one of his Natures

tures *knew*? If this be not a Demonstration, the *Unitarians* think there are no Evidences in the World, and it is impossible to discern what are manifest Arguments, what not. And therefore the Dr. they think, should not barely have said, as he doth, that there is something which *seems very hard in his common Answer*; but he should have dared expressly to affirm, that it is altogether very invalid and impertinent. Let the Reader himself judge of it, by considering the manner how our Saviour expresses himself in both the Evangelists.

*Of that Day and Hour, knows no Man, (or no Body, or no Person, for it is in the Original, None knows of that Day and of that Hour,) no not the Angels that are in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father.* Mark, 13. 32. And, at the 36th. Verse of the 24th. of St. Math. *but my Father only.*

(If the Reader please to see any more than what has here been said upon these Texts, he may be refer'd to the 24th. Chapter of the *Apologia pro Irenico Magno*, and to the 9th. Chap. of the 2d. Section of *Cress's* 1st. Book *Touching one God the Father*, in both which Places the Argument, taken from those Passages of Scripture, is more at large treated of and most fully illustrated.)

Here is then what Dr. *Sherlock* desired, (Pag. 55th. of his aforequoted Book,) Namely, a Text, that *proves Christ to be properly but a Creature, such as the Unitarians hold him to be.* After this Argument, the *Unitarians* do not think any other to be very necessary. I shall therefore in a manner but mention the following, without much enlarging upon them.

It need only be added, concerning the present Argument, that *Cressius* takes notice of the other Answers to it, and that they most visibly appear to be such that they who insist upon them do most evidently shew, that they are obstinately resolv'd to defend an old Prejudice, and that they will by no reasonable Means be persuaded to acknowledge the Truth, which disposition cannot but be criminal.

To say, for instance, that *Christ*, considered as God as well as Man, said that he knew not the Day of Judgment, in the same sense that St. *Paul* said of himself, (1 Cor. 2. 2.) that he determined not to know any thing among the *Corinthians*, save *Christ Crucified*; is it not to declare that those Men will take hold of any Evasion, rather than yield? For doth not that expression of St. *Paul*, that he determined not to know, shew manifestly the difference betwixt his Assertion and our Saviour's, who says expressly that he *knew not* the Day of Judgment, and that none but the Father *knew it*? The Expression of St. *Paul*, which we have rendered, *determined*, may be translated, *judged* or *condemned*, and so *Erasmus* has interpreted it, as if St. *Paul* had said, (to declare that actually he did not rely on the force of Eloquence, but on the Power it self of the Gospel, which he knew was attended with sufficient Evidences, without setting it forth with the Ornaments and Advantages of an Elaborate Oration, as he might have done, which declaration is incontestably the scope and whole intent of the Apostle's reasoning,) "I have condemned my self to be among you," or, "I have judged it fittest to be among you, as knowing nothing but *Christ Crucified*, lest the Testimony of the Cross and Sufferings of *Christ* and the Demonstration of the Spirit should be thought insufficient Evidences, therefore when I came unto you, I came not with excellency of Speech, but barely contented my self most sim-



"ply to set before you the Testimony of God." The current of the Discourse shews, that St. Paul did not deny his knowing any thing besides Christianity, but only asserted that he judged a Demonstration of all his other Learning unnecessary, in comparison of that, and in order to the end which he proposed to himself, namely, the Conversion of the *Corinthians*; wherefore, according to our Version, he determined to be, or determined to appear, as knowing nothing else but Christ Crucified, and wholly neglected to make a shew of his Eloquence. It is undeniably evident, that this is his meaning. But it is as evident, that there is *no such restriction* in our Saviour's expression, and that he *simply* denies his knowing at all the Day of Judgment; and *expressly* asserts that none but the Father knew it. This Argument, it seems, therefore, will remain to the end of the World such a one as the Dr. desired, a positive Proof, that Christ properly is not God Almighty himself: And the *Unitarians* hold, that, to deny it, is to fly wilfully in the face of Evidence. For, as to the Knowledge of that Day, the Son puts himself into the same rank with the Angels and all other Creatures, and says that he knows it no more than they; which is as express a denial of his knowing it, as it is possible to be.

To this Head, and for a further Illustration of this Argument, we may add the Saying, in the first Verse of the first Chapter of the *Revelations*, that God gave that Revelation to Jesus Christ. For by those words it appears, that Jesus Christ had not that Revelation of himself, and consequently that Jesus Christ is not the Supreme God, tho' yet he be God, or a God, and God's Representative in whom the Father in an extraordinary manner dwells, as was said.

If that Person, designed or signified in Scripture by the Name of Jesus Christ, were literally the Supreme God, that Verse would bear this Sense, that the Supreme God gave to another Person who is also the Supreme God a Revelation which he had not till then that it was given him; otherwise, if he had it before, it needed not to have been given him: On the other hand, if he had it not, 'tis plain this is an indigent God, not the same with the Giver, and consequently not the Supreme God.

To this some answer, that this Person received the whole Godhead from all eternity from the Father, and therefore whatever he enjoys at any time, or whatever knowledge he has, he may be said to receive it from God, there, by God, meaning the Father. But we reply, this visibly is precariously said. For if from all eternity Christ had all knowledge from the Father, what occasion was there for taking notice here that he had this particular knowledge from God? There appears not to be here any particular reason for it.

Therefore the last refuge is in the distinction of the two Natures. And so either the Meaning is, that the Father gave that Revelation to the Man Christ: (But then we reply, that was not necessary, if another All-knowing Person was hypostatically-united with that Man:) Or else it only remains the Meaning must be supposed to be, that the Second Person of the Trinity gave that Revelation to the Man Jesus Christ. To this we reply. The Name Jesus Christ denotes the whole Person, and, according to the *Trinitarians*, that Person implies the Supreme God as well as the most highly dignified Creature; and therefore God then could not be said simply, or in general terms, to give any thing to Jesus Christ.

III. The *Unitarians* do very much wonder, that any one who has read the Scripture should ask for a Text, where it is taught that Christ is not literally the Almighty God himself; seeing that in *Two Hundred and Seventy Three* distinct Passages of the New Testament Christ is expressly distinguished from God. Whence rationally we ought to infer, that *Christ* is not literally and expressly that God from whom he is distinguished, and that therefore when he is called God it must be understood in an inferior Sense, according to the Significations, we have mentioned, in which that Title is used: As in a Country (as it is in *France*) where the *King's Eldest Son*, when he is spoken of either singly or together with other Princes or Lords, is by way of eminency called *My Lord*; it is obvious, that, then, another Lord (who is also, tho' in an inferior sense, called *My Lord*, but not simply, or as by a distinguishing character, but as by a common title to which is and must be added something to notify the Person spoken of, or who at least is never simply stiled *My Lord* when spoken of together with the *King's Eldest Son*.) being thus distinguished from *My Lord*, or from Him that is called *My Lord* simply and by way of eminency, then, I say, the other Lord is thereby declared not to be that *My Lord* himself, the *King's Heir*, but an inferior Lord. What the *Trinitarians* then here say, that the Title of God tho' most particularly and eminently appropriated to the Father, as it is in Scripture, does not exclude other Persons, thus expressly distinguished from him, from being the same God, not only is a mere begging of the question, and is without grounds, but is expressly contrary to all reason. That Subterfuge therefore of the *Trinitarians* is wholly vain. And indeed did St. Peter suppose that *Cornelius* knew of the Evasion of the *Trinitarians*, when, preaching the Gospel to him, he distinguished, in the current of his Discourse, Christ from God? *Acts*, 10. 36.

IV. At the 19th. Verse of the 5th. of St. *John*, our Saviour himself tells us, that the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do. Now, in good truth, could one, that were literally the Almighty God, say this concerning himself? Can the Almighty and All-Wise God be supposed able to do nothing, but what he must be taught how to do it? Surely it were a monstrous Supposition, to reckon He needed to be taught any thing. Whereas, if God's Only-Begotten Son be not properly God Almighty himself, but the Word Incarnate, (according to the *Arians*;) such as we have described, who from the beginning was a God in the highest signification of the inferior senses in which that title is used in Scripture, and who is assisted of God in the manner we have declared, it is very rational and true to say of him, that he cannot do the Divine Works of himself, but that he doth them only as he is taught and assisted by the Father to do them. To which agrees, what he says, at the 10th. Verse of the 14th. Chapter of the same Gospel; the Father, (not a Second Divine Person,) that dwells in me, he properly doth the Works, inasmuch as it is he that assists me to do them: And, accordingly, Christ declared, that, tho' he had a vast Power even then granted him and was enabled to do mighty Miracles, yet God (the free Donor and Disposer thereof) had reserv'd infinitely more Prerogative to himself, and the Disciples were not to doubt but that God, from whom Christ had all that he had, was still greater than he. *John*, 14. 28.

V. In like manner, a Person, that were literally the Almighty God himself, could not say to the Father, (as Christ doth, *John*, 17. 5.) *Glorify thou me with thine own self,*  
*with*

with the Glory which I had with thee before the World was. For, whatever the *Trinitarians* may say or think of it, a Person that were literally the Almighty God, could no more be at any time without his Glory, than he could ever be without his Nature and Essence, or could cease to exist. For the Highest Glory is inseparable from the Supreme God; for as he exists necessarily from all Eternity, so he is necessarily All-Perfect, and consequently All-Glorious. But *the Word*, being such as we have described, having received all his Perfection from the mere free Bounty of the Father, and holding the Height of his Glory precariously from the Hand of the Supreme God, and as but during the Pleasure of the Almighty; this Sublime Creature then, I say, that is called *the Word*, might be divested of the greatest part of his Glory for a time, and be reduced to and contracted into the Narrowness and Lowliness of an Innocent Human Soul, for the Undertaking and Performance of a peculiar Office, during which, considering the Anguish and Difficulties attending it, this Person may well be supposed to groan and long for that excellent and inestimable Glory and Happiness, which he enjoyed with God before the World was, being then glorified and dignified with an extraordinary and an eminent and intimate partaking even of the Divine Nature, Sovereignty and Power, which, in becoming Man, he in a great measure actually deposited into the hands of God, (to receive again, indeed, afterward, with Interest,) whereas, as was said, it is impossible for the Almighty God at all to deposite at any time his Perfection, Power and Glory. See the afore-quoted Treatise of *Crellius*, Book 1st. Section 2d. Chapter 18th. on the Argument, *That all things are given to Christ from the Father.*

VI. The last Argument of the *Unitarians*, which I shall now take notice of, and that also briefly, (considering all that has been said here and elsewhere,) is, That it is expressly declared, in several Places of Scripture, that *the Father Only* is the Supreme God.

*John*, 17. 3. *This is Life eternal, to know thee only, (Father,) to be the true God, and Jesus Christ to be thy Messenger.* It is evident that that must necessarily be the Construction of the words. For the Adjective *Only*, when it is employed to exclude other Subjects from the partaking of the Predicate, belongs to the Subject, and not to the Predicate. Now it is incontestable; (seeing the Reason of the Thing, and the Scope of the Argument; that is, the Resolution of these grand Articles, Namely, Who is the true God; And, Which is the Way to eternal Life?) and indeed it is agreed by all; that in this place the word, *Only*, is employed to exclude other Subjects from the partaking of the Predicate. Wherefore all others, besides the Father, are hereby necessarily excluded from being the true God. For if all others were not so, then none could be supposed to be hereby excluded; and so the reasoning would be insignificant. See *Crell*, in the beginning of his afore-quoted Treatise.

*Ephes*. 4. 4, 5, 6. *There is one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all.* The Father only is that God who is above all, or who is properly the True and Supreme God.

1 *Tim*. 2. 5. *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus.* That it is the Father only who is that one God, is then evident; in that Christ is opposed to that one God: And the Mediator between God and Men, is said to be a *Man*, and not a God-Man. See *Crell*, on that Text.

1 Cor. 8. 6. *To us there is but one God, the Father.* (To which Place we may joyn the 9th. Verse of the 3d. of St. James's.) That one, then, who is properly the God, is the Father, of whom are all things. And, under him, there is but one Universal Lord, by and for whom the Father prepared all things, that this most God-like Lord might be at the Head of them, to the greatest Glory of the Father, the eternal, and Supreme, the only Wise, (perfectly, and in himself,) and the only one, the true God. See 1 Tim. 1. 17. compared with Rom. 15. 6. and 16. 27.

1 Tim. 1. 17. *Unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory for ever.*

Rom. 16. 27. *To God only Wise, be Glory, thro' Jesus Christ.*

Rom. 15. 6. *With one Mind, and with one Mouth, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* So Jam. 3. 9.

Thus we see the Unitarians not only shew some most express or expressly seeming Contradictions in the Platonick or Scholastick Trinity, (which Contradictions cannot be denied to be most express, unless it can be shewn expressly and invincibly that they are not such,) but they also produce several Texts, which appear most express and evident for the Unitarian System. Upon which account, they think, they are the more authorized, and incontestably warranted, to consult also as they do in this Matter the Light of Reason, which, as was said, furnishes them with several unanswerable Arguments of the Impossibility of the Scholastick or Platonick Trinity of real Divine Persons in one God, (as may be seen in the *Apologia pro Irenico Magno*;) and, consequently, of the Reasonableness of the Unitarian System and the Unitarian Interpretations. They reckon, that the Arguments taken from Reason, and those taken from Scripture, do very much strengthen one another. Howbeit, they chiefly insist on those taken from Scripture, as appears from that Treatise of *Crellius*, which has been so often quoted.

Here then it is very fit to remember Dr. *Sherlock's* Words, which we quoted before, and which are to this purpose: "That if any Text be produced, which proves Christ (properly or in his own Person) to be but a Creature, this ought to put an end to the Controversy, and either excuse or justify all the Unitarian Interpretations of Scripture, how harsh soever they may otherwise appear," &c. *The Scripture-Proofs of our Saviour's Divinity explained.* P. 35.

I leave it to the Reader to sum up the Evidence, (it being so obvious, and easily done,) and shall only shew what follows, most incontestably, from the whole, including the Arguments for the Gospel-Terms of Communion, handled in the *Irenicum Magnum*, and particularly in the *Apologia pro Irenico Magno*, where, as was said, there are also Arguments, as here, and in *Crell's* Book, against the Trinitarian System, which I find no where satisfactorily answered, and which appear indeed most express and unanswerable. Howbeit, it is my most earnest desire, to be rightly informed, and to see the Truth for into the greatest light.



## C H A P. XV.

*The Inferences most incontestably following from the whole foregoing Discourse, and the Gospel-Terms of Communion.*

**F**ROM the whole, these four things do most incontestably follow, as the least that can be granted to the *Unitarians*, by Protestants that impartially consider the Arguments treated of in the foregoing Discourse, and in the *Apologia pro Irenico Magno*.

I. That the State of this Controversy is such, that *Men may be Unitarians, and be very sincere, pious and inquisitive*; and that if *Unitarianism* be an Error, it is not a damnable and an intolerable one, or an Heresy.

II. That, in the Case of this most abstruse Controversy, we ought, in our Terms of Communion, with relation thereunto, to keep to the Generality of the Terms of Scripture, and not Magisterially determine this Matter any farther than that Generality, nor force or fright away the *Unitarians* out of the Church-Society, but ought to regulate our Publick Service, and our Terms of Church-Union, according to the utmost Generality of the Expressions of Scripture, so as that *Unitarians* may without Scruple joyn with Us therein; seeing the *Gospel-Terms of Communion*, and the *Principles of Protestants*, require this Moderation, and enjoyn that Method, in reference to such Points, as are so very difficult and intricate, that sincere and inquisitive Persons may be at a loss and may mistake about them.

III. That, therefore, *First*, in the Publick Service we ought to address the Current of our Prayers directly as well as ultimately to God in general, in the Name & thro' the Mediation of Christ, in the Conclusion of them beseeching God to hear us, & grant us our Requests, for the Sake of his Dear Son, our Blessed Lord, Saviour and Redeemer; and so when we address some Ejaculations to Christ, we ought, as has been shewn, in general to address to him as to our Mediator or Mediatory Governor, & Sovereign, in whom the Fulness of the God-head so dwells, as abundantly and constantly to assist him in the Discharge of his Mediatory Office, whereby he both acts for God and represents God, & is in some sense God: *Secondly*, in our Publick Service likewise, & the Terms of Church-Union, we ought to be content with the Apostles Creed, which is worded in a Generality agreeable to that of Scripture, and ought not to think other Creeds necessary or expedient, which are artificially fram'd on purpose to depart from that Generality, and are incumbered with Human Decisions and Magisterial Impositions: *Thirdly*, no Subscription or Assent ought to be required of Clergy-men, but to the Bible it self, & to Doctrines expressed in the Words of Scripture, or in Terms that agree to the Scripture-Generality, the Clergy-men's Declaration being admitted, that they Subscribe and Assent to the things proposed to them, but so far as they are agreeable to the Generality of Scripture. These Three Points not only follow necessarily from the 2d. Inference, but are implied in it; and we rank them on a distinct Head, only that the Principles in general which are the Grounds on which these Particulars



ticulars are built, may first be more distinctly observed to be necessarily deducible from the *First Inference* and from the *Gospel-Terms of Communion*, and that then it may distinctly be considered what Particulars necessarily follow from those Principles, that the said Particulars may upon those demonstrated Grounds be firmly established.

IV. That, among all the other incontestable Reasons, for this Generality in the Terms of Church-Union, this is one, which follows from the First and Second Inferences, & deserves a distinct rank, Namely: that *this Method is the safest*, in a Controversy at least to be own'd by all considering *Trinitarians* to be most intricate: and that incontestably *it suffices* to Pray to God in general, to satisfy to the Duty of Praying to the God-head; God in general including the whole God-head; so that, when God in general is directly & ultimately Pray'd to, all is certainly worshipped that is to be adored with Supreme Worship: and when our Petitions are put up in the Name of Christ, the Mediatory Honour due to our Saviour is thereby paid him, being thus addressed to as the Mediator of the New Covenant, in whom the Fulness of the God-head dwells, as was said.

I. That the State of this Controversy is such, that Men may be Unitarians, and be very sincere, pious and inquisitive; and that if Unitarianism be an Error, it is not a damnable and an intolerable one, or a Heresy. This follows from the *high Probability* (at least) of the Arguments for Unitarianism, to say no more of them; for, after all, upon mature consideration, these Arguments seem to be express, and unanswerable; and on the other hand it seems, that a Solution is given to the Chiefest Objections of the Scholastick or Platonick Trinitarians. Howbeit, this at least cannot be denied to be a most difficult & intricate Point. And admitting, that the Unitarian System has no higher evidence than the other, and is encumbered with as great Difficulties, (to which Sentiment I have often, for a great while, been most inclined, even since I began to write on this Subject, esteeming it to be God's will and intention that we should for the most part suspend our judgment about it, and indeed it may with great appearance of reason be judged the fittest not to be too decisive in so mysterious and abstruse a Matter;) yet no advantage can thence be taken against the Unitarians, and every Trinitarian, that carefully and sincerely considers the Unitarian Arguments, seeing they are so weighty and considerable, must at least grant that they are such, that Men may take them to be good Arguments, and yet be very Honest, hearty Lovers of God, and to the best of their power Inquisitive, and that, consequently, if Unitarianism be an Error, it is not a damnable and an intolerable one, or a Heresy. For is it credible, that God will assign the dreadful Torments of Hell, for an Error, which good Men, who sincerely and diligently seek to know his Will and to practice it, cannot avoid taking for a Truth? God punishes nothing but what has some Wickedness in it, or some Pravity and Malice. Now what Malice or Wickedness is there, in being sincere, and seeking most carefully to understand the real Meaning of the Scripture? No Men do account innocent Mistakes punishable, in most difficult Matters, in which honest and diligent Persons may err. And shall we think God harder than Men? Far be that thought from any Christian! The Gospel is a benign and a gracious Oeconomy, and we are in the hands of the Father of Mercies. We may then be sure, that God will not impute unavoidable (and therefore pitiable) Errors. Wherefore the most rigid Trinitarians, that will impartially and attentively consider

the *Unitarian* Arguments, must needs discern, that, if *Unitarianism* be an Error, yet it is not a damnable one, and consequently not an intolerable one, nor therefore a Heresy.

*Gal. 5. 19, 20.* The Apostle declares that *Heresy*, taken in an evil Sense, (for in general it signifies a *Sett*, which includes some particular Sentiment, whether good or bad,) is a *Work of the Flesh*, that is, is the Attendant and Product of Wilfulness and Wickedness. And therefore, from what has been said, it manifestly appears, that *Unitarianism* cannot be a *Heresy*, in that Sense, tho' it were an Error; seeing that, if it be supposed that it may be an Error, yet it cannot but be own'd it has so many Arguments of Credibility, and looks so much like a Truth, that inquisitive Men may very honestly mistake about it, if indeed they err when they take it for the very Import and real Sense of Scripture.

*Tit. 3. 11.* The same Apostle expressly says, that those that are Hereticks, in being so, sin willfully, and are condemned of their own Conscience, being perverted by some evil consideration, knowing that they do not sincerely what lies in them towards the acknowledgement of the Truth, and it being in their power to consider and discern that their Tenets are not right, but favour Vice, and are suggested by the Flesh. So that a Heresy is a criminal and wilful departing from some Evident Truth; for the gratifying of Sensual Inclinations. Such was the Heresy of the *Nicolaitans*, who (as it is thought) would have Women to be Common. Such was the Heresy of the *Gnosticks*, who made Religion to consist in Speculation and the Knowledge of Mysteries, and who held that it was lawful to dissemble the truth to avoid Persecution. And such is the Heresy of those, who, possessed with a domineering Spirit, and a hasty and imperious Temper, drive away from their Communion, by Human Decisions, those that differ from their Sentiment, in Matters that are most Difficult. This is a Schismatical Heresy.

But there is no such thing in the Sentiments of the *Unitarians*, if it be an Error. It is far from gratifying the Flesh. It doth not indulge a careless and lazy humour, averse to consideration, and making Men willing to follow others blindly any whether, so they may but enjoy their ease and pleasure. But it exposes Men to trouble. And it is grounded on Arguments, that manifestly appear rational, and apt to persuade those, who are sincere and inquisitive, and who fear and love God. Moreover *Unitarianism* doth not require of any Christians, nor doth impose upon them, any thing against their Conscience, or necessitate them to dissemble their Sentiments. For it is not Magisterial, and Imposing; *Unitarians*, in Mr. *Obilingsworth's* words, proposing the Bible, that is, the Generality of the Expressions of Scripture, for Terms of Church Communion. And that *Unitarianism* doth not cause Men to be absolutely wanting in any essential Part of Religion, is implied in this consideration, that it is attended with so much Evidence and Credibility, that Men, as has been shewn, may be *Unitarians*, and be guiltless and without crime; it being not to be thought, that God has made any thing absolutely essential to Religion, wherein sincere and inquisitive Persons may mistake. For when Men, out of a Principle of Piety, do, in all Particulars, and even in the most intricate, what they can, to be rightly Inform'd, and to discharge their Duty; what can a Good God exact more?

Accord:

According to the Natural Ideas of God, the Tenor of the Gospel, and the Principles of Protestants; *Whatsoever is indispensibly Necessary must needs be Clear and Discernible to all that are sincerely Inquisitive.* And, after all, it cannot be denied, but that the Unitarians acknowledge those weighty Points, which are absolutely requisite, to move us to love and obey God and Christ. For in general they believe, that Christ according to God's express Will is to be lov'd and worshipp'd on God's account and to God's Glory and as most intimately united with God; that the Spirit belonging to Christ (which Christ disposes of, which He communicates to his Disciples, and whereby Christians are sanctified) is the Spirit and Power of God, that God dwells and acts most eminently in Christ, and that Christ is in the highest Station of the Universe, all Things being Subjected to him, the Father only excepted, to whose Praise and Service all Dispensations are designed ultimately to tend, (as all own,) and who efficaciously directs and assists Christ in his Sovereign and Universal Government, whereby Christ rules and acts as God, and according to his Desire, and the Laws he has enacted and established by the Covenant of Grace, thus appearing not as being a Subject, but as being the Sovereign, together with the Father, in this illustrious Oeconomy, the Effect and Fruit of which will last for ever, and the Honour and Glory whereof will eternally crown the Lord Jesus, so that he shall to all Eternity be most intimately United to the Father, and, when he shall particularly commit and deliver up the Universal Administration of Government into God's hands, when all his Subjects shall have attain'd to a Sinless Perfection and shall become Subjects to the Laws of a most Perfect State, even then he shall retain the title of Sovereign, he shall always be *the next to God*, and, tho' himself Subject to God so as that he shall live under God's peculiar Government and that all Creatures under him shall be under such an Oeconomy with respect to the Father as Adam was and as therefore may in that respect be termed *the Law* and not *the Gospel*, he shall remain World without end the Prince and Head of all Men and Angels. The Unitarians therefore believe Christ to be most highly exalted and dignified, and to be most intimately partaker of the Divine Nature, infinitely more eminently than Joseph was made partaker of the Egyptian Majesty and Government together with Pharaoh, when Pharaoh told him, *See I have set thee over all the Land of Egypt; thou shalt be over my House, and according unto thy Word shall all my People be ruled; only in the Throne will I be greater than thou*; and when, accordingly, Pharaoh took off his Ring from his Hand, and put it upon Joseph's Hand, and arrayed him in Princely Apparel, and made him to ride in the Second Chariot which he had, and they cried before him, *Bow the Knee*; and so Pharaoh made Joseph Ruler over all the Land of Egypt, and he swore to him that he should be the Disposer of War and Peace, and that all things should be managed, according to his Desire, and by his Laws and his Orders. Genl. 41. 40. &c.

This first Inference then is incontestable; *That Men may be Unitarians, and be very pious and sincerely inquisitive.* If any Body will deny it, let him shew that the Unitarian Arguments are frivolous, contemptible and insignificant. Till then, We shall be obliged to hold, that Unitarians are accepted of God. This is one of those four things, which seem to be the least that can be granted, and concluded, from the Unitarian Arguments. The Second Inference, which, with the two other, is of the like nature with this, is now to be considered, and is to this effect.

II. That, in our Terms of Church-Communion, with relation to this most abstruse and intricate Subject, We ought to keep exactly to the Generality of the Expressions of Scripture, and not to make, beyond it, any Publick Determinations and Impositions, which would drive away the Unitarians out of our Communion. This necessarily follows from the first Inference, particularly considering the Nature of the Gospel Terms of Communion.

If the Unitarian Sentiment has so very considerable and weighty Arguments, that pious and inquisitive Men may, sincerely and without any crime on their part, take it to be the true Meaning of Scripture ; We cannot Magisterially determine that Controversy to the Scholastick and Anti-Unitarian Sense, by any Human and Unscriptural Impositions, without rejecting out of our Communion those whom God receives. In doing which, we manifestly transgress the express Injunction of the Apostle's, Rom. 14. 1, not to reject those who may be accounted to be weak in the Faith, in such a case, that, notwithstanding their suppos'd weakness and error, it appears they may still be acceptable to God. Indeed the Apostle will not, that such be admitted expressly to dispute in the Church about doubtful Matters ; howbeit, 'tis evident on the other hand, what he enjoyns can imply no less than this, that the Terms of Church-Communion be regulated in that Generality, that no Publick Determinations and Impositions be made, as would drive away those who may be accounted to be weak in the Faith in such a case as this. Otherwise, how can We be said to receive them ? The Apostle therefore thus argues, at the 4th. Verse of this Chapter ; *Who art thou that judgest another Man's Servant ? To his own Master he standeth or falleth, yea, he shall be bolden up.* And at the 13th. Verse he concludes the Argument in these words ; *Let us not then judge one another any more ; but judge this rather, that no Man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.* (See Bishop Wilkin's two Sermons on Rom. 14. 17, 18.)

These are manifestly and incontestably the Gospel-Terms of Church-Union ; and this is all that I plead for, and no Protestant. can with any colour of reason refuse these Terms, consistently to the Principles of the Reformation.

(According to these Principles, what Right had Athanasius, or the Nicene, to make and impose New Creeds ; to judge Magisterially for all the Members of the Church ; to determine Magisterially the Generality of Scripture ; to straiten the Terms of Communion, in Matters at least most abstruse and intricate ; and thus to break the Church's Union in pieces ?)

We hold, that the Scripture is a perfect and sufficient Rule ; that there is no living, publick, magisterial Judge of Controversies ; that the Church-Governors are not to exercise dominion over the Faith of their People ; that they are not infallible ; that every one is bound to examine, and is to be allowed the Judgment of discerning. (See Bishop Wilkin's aforequoted Sermons.) Now what follows from these and the like Principles, but that, in most abstruse and intricate Matters, We must not make publick Determinations and Impositions, but must then strictly keep to the Generality of the Terms of Scripture, as is shewn in the First and Second Chapters of the *Apologia pro Itenico Magno* ? Otherwise, it is most palpably evident, We expressly contradict our own Principles ; We allow not to the Church-Members the liberty to judge for themselves ; We reckon not the Expressions and Generality of Scrip-  
ture.



ture to be a sufficient Rule of Union, but imagin We can devise one better and firmer; We act, as if We were infallible, and were the Magisterial Judges of Controversies, and, not contenting our selves with the Terms of Scripture for Terms of Union, not being content to let the Truth on its own Bottom, We run the hazard, since We may err, of fighting effectually and criminally against God, in crushing the Truth, in eternizing Error, in taking away the Key of Knowledge, and at least in oppressing the Consciences of those whom God accepts, and in being the Cause of endless Schisms and Divisions.

It follows then, (according to the 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16, 17. 2 Cor. 1. 24. 1 Thess. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 10. 15. Rom. 14. 1. and 13. Phil. 3. 15, 16. &c. and consistently to the 6th. Article of the Church of England, and to all the abovesaid Principles of Protestants,) That, in our Terms of Church-Communion, with relation to the Unitarian Controversy, We ought to keep exactly to the Generality of the Expressions of Scripture, and not to make, beyond it, any Publick Determinations and Impositions, which would drive away the Unitarians out of our Communion. Hence therefore We must necessarily infer.

III. That, First, in the Publick Service, We ought to address the Current of our Prayers directly as well as ultimately to God in general, in the Name and thro' the Mediation of Christ, in the conclusion of them beseeching God to hear us, and grant us our Requests, for the Sake of his Dear Son, our Blessed Lord, Saviour and Redeemer, and so, when We address some Ejaculations to Christ, We ought in general to address to him as to our Mediator, or Mediatory Governor, & Sovereign, in whom the Fulness of the Godhead so dwells, as abundantly & constantly to assist him in the Discharge of his Mediatory Office, whereby he both acts for God and represents God, and in some sense God: Secondly, in our Publick Service likewise, and the Terms of Church-Union, We ought to be content with the Apostles Creed, which is worded in a Generality agreeable to that of Scripture: Thirdly, no Subscription or Assent ought to be required of Clergy-men, in this Matter and its Dependents, but to the Expressions of the Scripture it self, or to Terms that agree to the Scripture-Generality. For if We do not take these Measures or do not follow this Method, if we do not stick to this Generality in all Terms and Acts of Church-Union, and do not content our selves, with a general Profession that Christ is God, and with the Scriptural-Terms and Expressions; we both act rashly and unjustly, in a most intricate Matter, and We drive away the Unitarians out of our Communion, not receiving them without they think in these difficult Points exactly as we do, and submit to our Decisions, and profess the eternal Generation, three Persons in one God-head, and the Equality of the Son and Spirit with the Father; which is to judge for others in a most abstruse and obscure Subject, and to require of them, as Terms of Union, to act against their Conscience, as the generality of them believe, and be hypocrites, and utter lies, and grossly equivocate, in the greatest Solemnities of Religion; whereby many Souls may be caused to perish, for whom Christ died. (See *The Consequences of the Modalists System.*) The Athanasian and Nicene Creeds are too express, or particular, and magisterial, for so sublime Speculations, left in so great a Generality as we see these are in Scripture. We have no right, therefore, to set up such magisterial & imperious Terms of Communion, (according to the Protestant Principles,) as it appears from what has been said; but We are necessarily oblig'd to keep to the Terms of Church-Union that we have here de-



described; seeing it appears, that We are to receive the Unitarians, and not to drive them away out of our Communion, it being incontestable, upon impartial consideration, that the Unitarian Controversy is of that nature, that Men may be Unitarians, and be very sincere and inquisitive, and consequently not to be rejected, and it being to be remarked that the Generality of the Scripture-Terms is sufficient and safe; from the whole it being necessarily to be inferred in the last place.

IV. That this Generality, in Terms of Church-Union, is a safe Method, in so intricate a Matter, and is incontestably sufficient; all being certainly worshipped, when God in general is directly and ultimately Prayed to, that is to be adored with Supreme Worship, and the Mediatory Honour due to our Saviour being paid him, when our Petitions are put up in the Name of Christ, as our Intercessor and Redeemer, most beloved of God, and exalted at God's Right Hand, and so is addressed to as the Mediator of the New Covenant as was said. In most intricate Matters, that certainly cannot but be most safe, which is subject to the least Inconveniencies, and which is in some measure sufficient. And incontestably it is sufficient to worship God with Supreme Worship; for all that is God is Worshipped, when God in general is Worshipped. Wherefore the generality of the Reformed Churches content themselves to address their Prayers in general to God. And some of the most Learned Trinitarians maintain, that it is not lawful to do otherwise, but that formal Addresses to different Most Supreme Persons, in Divine Worship, set up different Objects of Supreme Worship.

For the same reasons, in the Publick Terms of Union, a general Profession of the Doctrine of the Trinity, in the general Expressions of Scripture, is both the safest, and is certainly sufficient. And all this doth even necessarily follow from the 1st. and 2d. Inferences. For there it appears, that God absolutely requires no more, for Terms of Union. What God therefore is content with to that end, is to that end incontestably safest as well as sufficient: so that if Men, instead of taking upon them to be Magisterial Judges, would have stuck to the Latitude and Generality of Scripture, for Terms of Agreement and Union, all had been well.

We must needs then own, that the Scripture-Expressions, to be adhered to in Terms of Church-Union, at least will suffice to all the indispensibly necessary ends of Salvation; and that, consequently, it is sufficient in general to know and believe, that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit and Inspiration and Power of God, and that Christ is the Only-Begotten Son of God, in whom the Fulness of the God-head (that may be communicated and that is an Influence of all the Divine Perfections) most intimately dwells, and that he is in some sense God. It is evident, that this System furnishes the same Motives to love God and Christ, and to practise the Precepts of the Gospel, that the other System doth. For if one Divine Person with the Influences and Assistances of his Wisdom and Power be suppos'd to do, together with Christ, all that belongs to our Salvation; have we the less reason to be thankful to God and Christ, and to hearken to the Gospel-Injunctions, than if we suppos'd three Divine Persons, or called God three Persons? It is as effectual therefore to the ends of Christianity, to hold, that the Spirit is the Power of God, and that Christ most eminently acts for God, and is most intimately united with God, by the means of the Divine Influence dwelling in him, so that when Christ is obey'd and lov'd, thereby God is actually lov'd and obey'd, Christ being thus lookt upon, both,

as most excellently and most extraordinarily representing God, and as being in some sense God. Many Trinitarians do expressly assert, that the Second Person is but a continual *Acting* of the Father. Why may not the same be said of the Holy Spirit and Inspiration? Or why may not the *Word* and the *Spirit* be stiled *Influences*, as well as *Acts*, of the Father? Howbeit, We may certainly very fitly conclude this Subject, with the Words of the late Dr. *Sherlock*, at the 7th. Page of that Book of his, intituled, *The Present State of the Socinian Controversy*, where, concerning the (human, and unscriptural) Expressions, *three Persons, Of the same Substance, Essence,* and the like, he has this judicious remark; *The Catholick Faith does not depend upon the use of these terms, for it was before them.* Now, this is all that I plead for; that these and the like unscriptural terms be not looked upon as necessary for Christian-Communion, but that Christians may be so reasonable and just as to Unite in the Generality of the Expressions of Scripture, which, it is evident, God has judg'd sufficient, since He thought fit to use them, as He has done, that is, in the Generality of which they appear susceptible. Incontestably, then, 'tis neither Necessary, nor indeed, consequently, Safe, nor Just, in such most intricate Matters, to go beyond the very express Words of Scripture, in Terms and Acts of Church-Communion. (Besides; Are not the Tares as well as Wheat to be suffered in the Church, by Christ's Order? *Math.* 13. 30.) The Scripture-Latitude must needs therefore be THE TERMS OF UNION. We need not and ought not to be more express, or determining, and imposing, than the Scripture.

Tho' the Person of Christ were not fully known, yet, notwithstanding that there is no other Name by which Penitent Men are Saved, He may be the Saviour of all them in every Nation who do righteousness, and for his Sake God may accept of their sincere Repentance and Obedience. As *Amyraldus* judiciously observed; if a Prince has been graciously pleased to ransom a Captive, or pay the Debts of a Poor Prisoner, that Redeemed one is not the less ransomed and made free, tho' he do not perfectly or exactly know all that belongs to the Person by whom he is redeemed; all that is reasonably and indispensably requisite being that he should do what he can to know his Benefactor, and that he should be in a hearty disposition to express his Gratitude for the Benefit, to the best of his power, according to the Knowledge he can get thereof.

In the Revelations, 19, 12, We find it is said, that our Saviour has a Name, which no Man understands but He Himself. Why then should We be so Decisive, Magisterial and Imposing, as if We certainly and infallibly understood all these Mysteries? As we cannot reasonably imagin that we infallibly understand the most difficult things, we ought not in reason to pretend to determine and judge for other Men in the most abstruse and intricate Matters. Howbeit, it seems the Semi-Arian System is much the same with, or not essentially different from, this, of the Father, or God, and his two Powers, and Influences or Acts. And it seems, this is reconcilable with Scripture and Reason. God grant Us all to do our Duty, in this Inquiry, and in all respects, that We may discern and follow the things absolutely Necessary to Peace and Salvation!

## A POST-SCRIPT.

*Wherein it is farther consider'd, That the Arguments for the Divinity of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, at most, seem not to be inconsistent with the Unitarian System, or to destroy the Necessity of keeping, with relation to this Doctrin, to the Generality of the Expressions of Scripture, for Terms of Church-Communion ;*

*Wherein also it is inquir'd, Whether the Unitarians may with a good Conscience joyn in Communion with a Trinitarian Church ? Of the Reasons of both Sides of which Query the Governors of the Church are humbly desir'd to give their Opinion.*

**F**ROM the whole, it seems that these *three* Points deserve a particular Consideration.

I. It should be considered, that the Arguments for the Divinity of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, seem not inconsistent with the Unitarian System.

II. It should be inquired, Whether the Unitarians may joyn in Communion with the Trinitarian Church ?

III. We should consider, that what is inferred from the Unitarian Arguments remains in force, and that it is an indispensable Duty to profess and establish the Gospel-Terms of Communion, and to keep to the seeming or apparent Generality of the Expressions of Scripture for Terms of Church-Union, tho' the Trinitarians and some Unitarians should opine that the Unitarians may with a good Conscience joyn in Communion with the Trinitarians, and even tho' there were in God what might truly be called Three Persons.

I. It should be considered that the Arguments for the Divinity of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, seem not inconsistent with Unitarianism.

For tho' by the Holy Ghost and the Word the Divine Nature be taken to be implied, yet it follows not that the Father is not the whole God-head. Nay, the Scholastick Trinitarians themselves acknowledge, that the Father implies the whole Divine Nature. Consequently, whatsoever is properly and literally Divine belongs to the Father, and is a Property or Act of his Essence ; seeing that it belongs to the Divine Nature, and 'tis own'd the Father implies the whole Divine Nature. St. Basil agreeably to this (Tom. 1. Pag. 778. Paris. 1638.) calls the Divine Word and Spirit the two Hands of God ; founding that Expression on Ps. 19. 1. and 102. 25. compar'd with Ps. 33. 6. Hands or Arms are the same, speaking of a Spirit : And we see mention made of the Arms of God, Deuter. 33. 27. Job. 40. 9. Ps. 98. 1. Isa. 51. 5. &c. Howbeit, in speaking of God, who is a Spirit, or a Spiritual Being, it is evident it must be own'd, that these Expressions are but Figurative. All then that the Arms or Hands of God

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can imply, must be some *Powers, & Properties, or Acts & Influences, that belong to God*. Now, by *God* the *Scholastick Trinitarians* themselves understand *the Father*, (or Him whom the Scriptures, and particularly the Books of the New Testament, ordinarily or frequently stile *our Father*, as well as in general *the Father*, meaning the Common Parent of Men, more particularly the Father of Christians, & most especially the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as all agree.) And, then, as was observed, the *Scholastick Trinitarians* acknowledge, that *the Father implies the whole God-head*. Our Saviour is express, that the Father dwells in him, and doth the Works in him. *Joh. 14: 10.* And the Apostle teaches us, that Christ is to be honoured to the Glory of the Father. *Phil. 2. 11.*

All therefore that is meant, and that appears can be meant, by the Divinity of Christ, or the Hypostatic Union, is, that the Divine Nature is so intimately united with the Soul of the Man Jesus Christ, (as the Human Soul is with the Body,) that the Divine Influence, or Divine Indwelling, in him, and particularly the Divine Wisdom, constantly illuminate, conduct and assist Christ, so as to enable him, to represent God at the Head of the Universe & to perform all the things necessary for such a Representative of God to do; so that what belongs to God may be said to be Christ's, (all in kind, tho' not all in all degrees,) who sees & honours Christ may be said to see & honour God, & what God doth at Christ's desire may be said to be done by Christ, who procures it to be done by the God-head dwelling in him, as a Human Soul, simply and merely by desiring, procures of the Body, with which she is united, to do many Actions, that she willerth, & that God has subjected to the Soul's Will and Power. Holding then that some Texts of Scripture in some sense import the Supreme Divinity of Christ, yet it can never be prov'd, or with any colour of reason pretended, that they necessarily imply any more than this. For there are invincible Arguments against the being of more than one real Person in God; & by a Figure, common in Scripture & in all Languages, Personal Acts may reasonably be attributed to Divine Wisdom, or to a Divine Influence, tho' it be not a distinct Person, but a Property or an Act of the Father. (Even *Charity* is represented as a Person, *1 Cor. 13. 1.* And God is said to send forth his *Mercy*, *Pf. 57. 3.*) Supposing then that by *the Word*, in the beginning of *St. John's Gospel*, be meant the Divine Wisdom, produc'd forth and shewn in the Old and New Creation, (as it is even interpreted in the *Brief History*;) in that case, it must necessarily be suppos'd to be said by a Figure to be incarnate, meaning that it rested upon, in an extraordinary & most ample manner, or most intimately dwelt with, and constantly assisted and illuminated, the Man Jesus Christ, as if it had become Part of him, or were his own Soul. Christ, then, the Son of God, is a Divine Person, in that he is a Man assisted and inhabited by a Divine Influence, or Divine Virtue.

And holding that some Texts of Scripture assert the Supreme Divinity of the Holy Ghost, it doth not follow that thereby is meant any thing else than the Divine Inspiration, or an Influence of the Divine Power, (either Directing or Wonder-Working,) that is commonly annexed to, and, so, communicated to Men by, the Chief Arch-angel, and (under him) some Select Angels; or the whole Body of Holy Angels, as a healing Virtue was sometimes annexed to, and communicated by, the Waters of *Jordan*, &c. (*2 Kings, 5, 14. 13, 21. John, 9. 6. Acts, 19. 12.*)

Now, then, tho' the Divine Wisdom and Power be God himself, that doth not destroy the Unitarian System, or necessarily imply more than one real Person in God.



( For if the Holy Spirit is also a Person, it is as it implies an Angel assisted by the Divine Power; as the Divine Word is a Person, meaning thereby the Man Jesus Christ inhabited by the Divine Nature.) We have seen that *the Unitarians* themselves, in *that Sense*, acknowledge the Supreme Divinity of Christ and of the H. Ghost; by the Divine H. Ghost meaning the Divine Inspiration annexed to & communicated by the Angels; & by the Supreme God-head of Christ meaning in particular the Divine Wisdom and Sovereign Authority & Influence of the Divine Power dwelling & acting in and with Christ.

From which it doth not follow, that the *Unitarians* make the Angels or some Angel to be God, tho' Christ be. For they do not hold, that the God-head in any respect is most intimately United with any Angel, or that the Dignity, Majesty, Authority, and Wisdom, as well as Power, that is, the Fulness, of the God-head, dwells in any Angel, so as that God be in an Angel to be therein Worshipped, as in a *Schechina* or appointed Token and Symbol of the Divine Presence; no Angel being constituted to represent God at the Head of the Universe, as Christ is, nor what belongs to God being said to belong to any Angel, who is but a Servant, as it is to Christ, who is made the Lord of all.

No Angel then can be said to be God, tho' Christ may, as the *Unitarians* acknowledge: And yet they hold, that, as was said, the Divine Power, as well as the Divine Wisdom, may be said to be God. Now, is it not the Safest here, to stick to that which is Incontestable and Sufficient?

And is it not Sufficient to acknowledge, that by *the Divine Word* may be understood a Divine Power, Virtue or Influence of the Father; that the Divine Spirit likewise is another Influence or Virtue of the Father; that the Divine Word is most intimately United with the First-born, the Word-bearer, or Soul of the Messiah; that this Virtue of the Father is so much made Christ's own, enjoying it as much as his own Soul or his own Reason & Power, that it may be look'd upon as Part of his Being, & as always having been even from the Beginning of the World Part of his Being, so that the Messiah may be said to have made all things, inasmuch as all things were made by that Divine Virtue of the Father, which from the beginning, as was said, was most intimately United to the Soul of the Messiah; that the Messiah is to be honoured, as the Mediator of the New Covenant, exalted to the Government of the Universe under God, and as the most Glorious *Schechinah*, in whom the Father most intimately dwells by an ineffable (tho' not visibly impossible) Virtue or Influence, & in whom the Father is thus willing to be Worshipped; & that the Divine Spirit, whether or no residing in or accompanying some Archangel or any Angels, (tho' incontestably not requiring to be Worshipped in any of the Angels, nor devolving any kind of Divine Worship to any Angels, as to the Sovereigns of the Universe, nor making a *Schechinah* of any of the Angels,) is that Miracle-Working or Sanctifying Virtue of the Father, which dwells in Christians as its Temple, (or the Father's Temple, whose Virtue the Spirit is,) and which, with the Divine Word, was instrumental to the Father, in making all things; as Fire is instrumental to the Apothecary in the preparing of all the Compositions in his Shop, or as Heat and Light are the Instruments by which the Sun operates all things and benefits all the World?

If the Father implies the whole God-head, as the *Trinitarians* unanimously own, it can not then be denied but that the *Unitarians* acknowledge & worship the whole God-head.

And,



And, as I conceive it, the *Unitarians* assert, that they worship Christ so much upon the account of the Divine Nature Dwelling in and most intimately United with him, that otherwise they would not altogether worship him as they do. It follows therefore, that, on the *Unitarian* part, the Difference cannot be thought to be essential or fundamental, or that the *Unitarians* cannot truly be said to deny the Divinity of Christ, or of the Holy Ghost. For as touching the Holy Ghost, it cannot be denied but that a Divine Virtue & Inspiration may be meant thereby. And as concerning what the Scholastick *Trinitarians* mean by or assert of the Divinity of Christ, the *Unitarians* own that that Divine Nature, which is most intimately United with our Lord Jesus Christ, doth truly belong to the Eternal and Almighty Beings, so that in that sense Christ may be said to be God, tho' properly the title *Christ* denotes the Man that was born of the Virgin *Mary*, as *Grotius* shews on *Col. 1. 16.* and *Matth. 1. 16.* The Difference then here is only a Verbal Difference, the Meaning of both Parties at the bottom being in this respect the same; for when the *Trinitarians* say that *Christ* is Almighty God, they do not mean that the Man is literally the Almighty, but that the Divine is most strictly United with the Human Nature. And this the *Unitarians* will not deny. 'Tis certain, the *Primitive Unitarians* did not deny it, as was before said. Then,

II. *We are to inquire, Whether the Unitarians may not join in Communion with the Trinitarian Church? By three Persons in one God,* (which term, Persons, the *Trinitarians* themselves own to be here not only unscriptural but even very improper,) may not the *Unitarians* mean, as some do, three Considerations of the Divine Nature, (for instance, Divine Mind, Divine Wisdom, Divine Power,) which are a kind of Modal Persons, which may be in the same Subject, as *Tully* says that a Man may sustain divers Persons?

The Reason for the Affirmative is: that for Peace-sake We must be made all things to all Men, so far as there is no Divine Law or Prohibition against that which We condescend to; (*Ephes. 4. 3.*) and that there is no Law against the *terming* the Divine Wisdom and Power *Persons*, meaning *Modal Persons*.

The Reasons for the Negative are these particularly. Not only, by the three Persons, the *Trinitarians* generally mean not such Modal, but rather Real, Persons, so that to mean such (supposed or pretended) Modal Persons would be a piece of Dissimulation; but even this term disguises the Christian Religion, and is contrary to the Gravity and Solemnity of the Divine Worship, &c. The Scripture no where enjoins us to address Prayers to God the Inspiration, or to assert a Divine Person by the Name of God the Holy Ghost. Tho' the Holy Ghost be taken to imply an Influence of the Divine Virtue, yet God the Holy Ghost, and the Inspiration a Divine Person, certainly are not Scriptural Terms. And the *Unitarians* generally believe, that in such intricate Matters, and particularly concerning the Object of Worship and the making Something distinctly an Object of Worship, We must not go beyond express Injunctions. According to Scripture, they worship Christ to the Glory of the Father, as was said. And in particular they ultimately worship the Father, for his giving the Divine Inspiration; The Governors of the Church are humbly desir'd, to give Publickly their Opinion of these & the like aforementioned Reasons; this undoubtedly being a Subject, that deserves all the illustration, that, according to the Obligations of Christian Charity, they can give to it. Tho' all that is possible ought to be done for Peace-sake, yet, on the other hand, nothing ought to be done against Conscience, and tho' some of the *Unitarians* might condescend to most of the Scholastick *Trinitarian* Expressions, yet they cannot generally approve them.

III. *What is infer'd from the Unitarian Arguments remains in force, so that it is an indispensable Duty to profess and establish the Gospel-Terms of Communion, and to keep to the seeming and most manifest and apparent Generality of the Expressions of Scripture for Terms of Church-Union, tho' the Trinitarians and some Unitarians should chide that the Unitarians may with a good Conscience join in Communion with the Trinitarians, and even tho' there were in God what might truly be call'd three Persons.* For,

(1.) If there be *Somewhats* in God that may be call'd *three Persons*, (which yet, indeed, seems absolutely, both, impossible in it self, and not expressly implied in Scripture, but contrary to many Texts,) yet, not only that Doctrine seems *absolutely unintelligible*, but certainly it is *most obscurely* revealed and but drawn from most intricate and uncertain Deductions; and, on the other hand, the *Unitarian Arguments*, against the calling any thing in God three Persons, are incontestably such that Men may be sincerely inquisitive and really think them to be solid. Upon such most abstruse Difficulties, We ought not to act rashly, and condemn or reject sincere and inquisitive Persons. God cannot be supposed, indispensibly to require of every one to believe explicitly what he has left so difficult and obscure, nor consequently to have allow'd any one to determine this Point Magisterially, so as to make the Determination of it a necessary Term of Church-Communion. Then it follows, it is God's Will, that, as has been said, in Terms and Acts of Church Union, we should content our selves with the Expressions and Generality of Scripture: And, so, the Human Imposition of the *Athanasian* and *Nicene* Creeds, and of Publickly Praying to the Holy Ghost, and in Publick Assemblies and Church-Service using the term *three Persons*, is a piece of Presumption and Spiritual Tyranny and Oppression. The Scripture says not expressly, that the Son and Spirit are equal to the Father, &c.

(2.) *The Generality of the Scripture-Terms*, as was shewn, is undoubtedly sufficient. For, tho' God might be said to be three Persons, yet not only it cannot be thought, as has been remarked, that, under the benign Oeconomy of the Gospel, God has made that indispensibly Necessary, which at least seems so intricate and obscure, and about which sincere and inquisitive Persons may mistake; but, besides, as was also before observ'd, when God is worshipped, is not all ador'd, that is the Object of Divine Worship? The *Trinitarians* own, that the (unscriptural) term, *Persons*, is us'd so improperly of God, that what is meant thereby is most unaccountable, & perfectly incomprehensible. Now that is an invincible Argument, that *that term is not necessary*. The *Unitarians* do not deny the Incomprehensibility of the Divine Nature. Supposing then, that by the Divine Word and Spirit be meant *Somewhats*, more than Wisdom and Inspiration, (as the *Unitarians*, who are not for determining in such obscure Matters, will not contradict but that it may be so,) yet seeing that that, whatever it be, is absolutely unknown & unintelligible, it concerns Us not to ascribe Names to it, & cannot be indeed the Subject of our disquisition. Howbeit, at least, we should take care not to advance any thing, concerning these Matters, that appears inconsistent with any Text, but should rather stick to that which is safe and sufficient: And, it is certain; the Scripture no where says we should Pray to the Holy Spirit in particular; and it expressly sets forth Christ as the Mediator betwixt God and Men: so that it is incontestably sufficient to come to God thro' the Mediation of Christ, and to honour Christ as the Mediatory King under God, tho' united to God as intimately

ly as possible, as was said. For tho' all things are subjected to Christ, yet it is, *to the Glory of God the Father*, and to the end that God may be most glorified, and may most universally and illustriously reign in and by and thro' Christ. So that, in making Christ the King of Kings, or the Universal King under God, and the Head of the Church, God did not abdicate the Government, or divest himself of his Majesty, but still remained ever the Most Supreme, and reserved to himself to direct Christ, and to favour his Intercession, and to receive thro' him the Homages of Men, Christ doing all in the Name of God. And, accordingly, the Apostles directed their Prayers to God, (*Acts*, 4, 24, &c.) and commanded the Faithful to address themselves to him, (*Phil.* 4, 6,) thro' Jesus Christ, (as it is in the following Verse, *Phil.* 4, 7,) that, in his Name, and thro' his Mediation, they might obtain their Requests of the Father, (according to Christ's Promise, *John*, 14, 13, & *John*, 16, 23, that what they should pray for to the Father, in his Name, he would second by his Intercession, & so would do it for them, *that the Father might be glorified in the Son*. For our Saviour says expressly, in *John*, 16, 23; *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, He will give it you*.)

( 3. ) The Arguments, for the *Scripture-Terms of Church Union* with respect to such most intricate and abstruse Matters as the Platonick or Scholastick Speculations concerning the Doctrin of the Holy Trinity, are evermore *solid and invincible*, and (as was observed) a contrary Method is wholly inconsistent with the *Principles of Protestants*, which import; That the *Scripture* is a *sufficient and the only Rule*, That there is *no living Magisterial Judge of Controversies*, That *Particular Christians* are in such a case to *examine and judge for themselves*, &c.

( 4. ) Many *sincere and inquisitive Persons* may scruple *other Terms*, than these which are incontestably good, sufficient, and the only warrantable ones, for Terms of Church-Communion, in such abstruse and intricate Matters. And, as was shewn, it is certain, the term, *three Persons*, is unscriptural, and consequently cannot be absolutely necessary. Wherefore surely Christian Charity obliges us, not to hazard unnecessarily, in such difficult Matters, the Destruction of those Souls for which Christ died. Therefore it certainly follows, both; *that the Scholastick Trinitarian Determinations and Impositions are contrary to God's Will*; and *that it is an indispensable Duty to profess and establish the Gospel-Terms of Communion*, which are stated and pleaded for in the *Irenicum Magnum*, and in the *Apologia pro Irenica Magno*.

Tho' *some Unitarians* (considering an *Influence of the Divine Nature dwelling in Christ*, and an *Influence and Act of the Divine Power implied in the Holy Spirit or Holy Inspiration*, and considering we are exhorted to keep as much as we can the *Unity of the Spirit* in the bond of Peace) should carry Christian Condescension so far, as (by their Presence, sometime, in the Religious Assemblies, for Peace-Sake, till these things be duly weighed) to bear with the Use of some of the Scholastick Trinitarian Terms; yet, that is at least so nice a Point, that many conscientiously may with great colour of reason absolutely scruple them, and all Unitarians are obliged to express openly their dislike of those (in their opinion) at least dubious Terms and rash Expressions, and to appear and profess not to repeat some of them, and not to assent to them, in the Religious Service: (which Condescension indeed, upon mature Consideration, seems even generally to be more than is wholly warrantable; particularly, one would think, with respect to the *Lisany*, and the *Athanasian* and *Nicene Creeds*, according to  
what:

what has hereupon been said; so that the Afternoon-Service only can well seem tolerable to them; and indeed 'tis generally reckoned to be no less than *Hypocritical Temperizing*, for any Unitarian to carry the *Condescension* farther: ) therefore even the *Trinitarians* themselves, who are persuaded of the (evident and incontestable) Reasonableness and Necessity of the *Gospel Terms of Communion*, are bound to protest against the imposing of those said *Schoolastick Terms*, (*deviating from the Scripture-Latitude*,) not only as an unnecessary Burden; but as a grievous and unwarrantable, a pernicious and cruel Oppression, perfectly contrary to the Moderation of the Gospel. For has not God intended, there should be *one Catholick Church*, and *Communion of Saints*?

In a word, the *Scripture-Terms* are the only *Just*, and *Charitable*, and *Necessary Terms of Church-Communion*. And they are a *fit Means of Peace*: For, so you establish no other *Terms of Church-Communion* but such as are agreeable to the *Scripture-Generality*, you may lay any *Penalty* on *express Disputings in the Religious Assemblies*.

These *Terms of Church-Union* then, both, are the *Scripture-Terms*, and the only *Terms of Communion* that are agreeable to the fundamental Grounds of the *Reformation*, or to the *incontestable Principles of Protestants*, and to *Reason and Moderation*, and they are the *fit and only possible Terms* for all Christians, that own the *Scripture* for their Rule, to *Unite in*: And the *Unitarian Arguments* are so considerable, that it must be the highest Temerity in the World not to be willing to stick, in Acts of Communion, to the (*Safe & sufficient*) *Generality* included in those *Terms*. So that to reject these *Terms*, is not only to run the greatest Hazards to oppress the Truth and injure those who are approved of God; but it is expressly to be guilty of the greatest Mischiefs, of disfiguring Christianity as if it had no Means of Union, hindering the growth and efficacy of the Gospel, and being the Cause of endless Schisms and Divisions. These Matters are set into so full and incontestable a light, that to slight and resist so great Evidence cannot but be of the greatest Consequence to the Souls of them that are therein concern'd. It is credible, God has preserv'd the World and this Generation for the Sake of this great Light, (most illustriously adorning the Gospel,) so great a Light, that against it the Gates of Hell shall never be able to prevail, and it will never be possible for all the Powers of the Adversaries of so evident Truths to answer these unanswerable Arguments. Now then, incontestably, Peace is presented upon just Terms, by this Method, which therefore should be most carefully considered. For if the righteous be oppressed, God noteth all things in his Book, and Great Plagues are denounced against rejecting a great Light and injuring those that are accepted of God. May We all take effectual Measures, to avoid God's Judgments, and to obtain his Mercy and Eternal Salvation!

I thought here to have finished this *Post-Script*; but it may, perhaps, not be unfit to advertise, that, since the writing of it, I have accidentally met with a small Pamphlet, (a 6d. Book,) wherein these *Terms of Communion* in some measure are likewise pleaded for. I recommend it therefore to the Reader's perusal. It is intitled, *The Moderate Trinitarian*, &c. By Daniel Allen. Printed for Mary Fabian, at Mercers-Chappel in Cheap-side; 1699. Therein it is Inquired, *Whether* (and Shewn, That,) *the Trinitarians and Unitarians may communicate together*; so that no Practice ought to be enjoined, for Terms of Communion, contrary to the Latitude of Scripture, seeing it is therein that the *Trinitarians* and *Unitarians* may Unite. But,



But (not only to put my self in the company of a more known Person, but more especially seeing Men commonly regard more, or slight the less, an Opinion which they see held by one who is generally esteemed most Eminent for Learning and all good Qualities.) I ought not to omit observing, that the famous Bishop Taylor incontestably establishes *these Terms of Church-Communion*, in *that* (for the main) admirable Book of his, intituled, *The Liberty of Prophefying*, which indeed I have had the misfortune to be but very lately acquainted with. That *the Scripture-Terms of Communion*, which I have been pleading for, are *therein* implied, I think may sufficiently appear by *these few Quotations* out of it. (That which I have, is the 4to. Edition, 1647.) I shall sometimes abridge the words, but without altering the sense.

" If a Doctrin be not so revealed but that wise and good Men differ in their Opinions, it is a clear case, it is not *inter Dogmata necessaria simpliciter*, &c. (*The Epistle Dedicat.* P. 15. 16.)

" It is observable, that the restraint of Prophefying, imposing upon other Mens Understanding, and lording it over their Faith, came in with the retinue of Antichrist, that is, as other Abuses and Corruptions of the Church did, &c. (*Ib.* P. 18.)

" Let not Men be hasty in calling every dislike'd Opinion by the Name of Heresy. (*Ib.* P. 29.)

" The Lutheran Churches, the Zuinglians, the Calvinists, the Socinians, the Anabaptists, the Ethiopian Churches which are all Nestorian, differ from others. Where then shall we fix our Confidence, or joyn Communion? To pitch upon any one, is to throw the Dice, if Salvation be to be had only in one of them, and that every Error be damnable. We have therefore no other help in the midst of these Differences, but to be all United in that Common Term, which is the Medium of the Communion of Saints, that is, the Apostles Creed, an honest endeavour to find out what truths we can, and a mutual permission to others that disagree from our opinions. I am sure this will secure us, but I know not any thing else that will. (*Ib.* P. 33.)

" If Men must be permitted in their Opinions, and Christians must not persecute Christians, there is as much reason to reprove all those oblique Arts, ungentle and unchristian, and destructive of Learning and Ingenuity; as Burning or Suppressing the Books and Writings of those of different Sentiments, forcing them to recant, &c. It is a strange Industry, us'd by our Fore-Fathers. Of all those Heresies which gave them battle, we have absolutely no Record or Monument, but what themselves who were their Adversaries have transmitted to us, &c. (*Ib.* P. 34.)

" Of the same consideration is Mending of Authors, not to their own mind but to ours. (*Ib.* P. 35.)

" I am not sure that such an Opinion is Heresy, neither would other Men be so sure as they think for, if they did consider it aright, and observe the infinite deceptions, and causes of deceptions in wise Men, and in all doubtful Questions, and did not mistake Confidence for Certainty. (*Ib.* P. 39.)

" It is of geateft consequence to believe right in the Question of the Validity or Invalidity of a Death-Bed Repentance, and the consequences of the Doctrin of Predetermination are of deepest and most material consideration; and yet these great  
" est



" est Concernments, where a Liberty of Prophesying in these Questions has been permitted, have made no distinct Communion, no Sects of Christians. (*The Liberty of Prophesying*. P. 3.)

" Salvation is in special and by name annexed to the belief of those Articles only, which have in them the inderments of our services, or the support of our confidence, or the satisfaction of our hopes. (*Ib.* P. 8.)

" The Apostles, or their Contemporaries and Disciples, compos'd a Creed, to be a Rule of Faith to all Christians; which Creed, unless it contain'd all the intire object of Faith, and the foundation of Religion, it cannot be imagin'd to what purpose it should serve; and it was so esteem'd by the whole Church of God, &c. (*Ib.* P. 9.)

" But if this was sufficient to bring Men to Heaven then, why not now? If the Apostles admitted all to their Communion that believ'd this Creed, why shall we exclude any that preserve the same intire? (*Ib.* P. 11.)

" Neither are we oblig'd to make these Articles more particular and minure than the Creed.—For altho' whatsoever is certainly deduced from any of these Articles made already so explicite, is as certainly true, and as much to be believed as the Article it self, yet because it is not certain that our deductions from them are certain, & what one calls evident, is so obscure to another, that he believes it false; it is the best and only safe course to rest in that explication the Apostles have made. (*Ib.* P. 12.)

" But if we go farther, besides the easiness of being deceived, we relying upon our own discourses, (which tho' they may be true and then bind us to follow them, but yet no more than when they only seem truest,) yet they cannot make the thing certain to another, much less necessary in it self. And since God would not bind us upon pain of Sin and Punishment, to make deductions our selves, much less would he bind us to follow another Man's Logick as an Article of our Faith. (*Ib.* P. 13.)

" For it is a demonstration, that nothing can be necessary to be believed under pain of Damnation, but such Propositions of which it is certain that God has spoken and taught them to us, and of which it is certain that this is their sense and purpose: For if the sense be uncertain, we can no more be obliged to believe it in a certain sense, than we are to believe it at all, if it were not certain that God delivered it, &c. (*Ibid.*)

[Here, to these words, I would only add, that this Generality may suffice, at least, for *Terms of Church-Union*; and that Men are answerable to God, Whether or no they do what lies in their power, to understand every Article as well as they can. Howbeit, certainly, fallible Men are not Magisterially to prescribe in most intricate Matters, or make then their Deductions a Rule, to other Christians. Perhaps the Apostles themselves knew not all Mysteries, or understood not perfectly all the obscure Expressions which they had written when they were inspired; as the Prophets did not always fully conceive the whole Meaning of all their Prophecies and Writings. How should this Consideration then humble Us, and keep Us from a decisive, magisterial and imposing Spirit!]

" And *this* also I affirm; altho' the Church of any one denomination, or represented in a Council, shall make the Deduction or Declaration. (*Ib.* P. 14.)

" Par-

" Particular Churches are bound to allow Communion, to all those that profess the same Faith upon which the Apostles did give Communion. (P. 262.)

" To refuse our Charity to those who have the same Faith, because they have not all our Opinions which we over-value; is Impious and Schismatical; &c. (Ib.)

" The *Arians* and *Melesians* joined against the *Catholics*: The *Catholics* and *Novatians* joyned against the *Arians*. Now if Men would do that for Charity which they do for Interest, it were handsomer and more ingenuous. (P. 263.)

" Men would do well to consider whether or no such proceedings do not derive the guilt of Schism upon them who least think it, and whether of the two is the Schismatick? he that makes unnecessary and inconvenient Impositions; or he that disobeys them, because he cannot without doing violence to his Conscience submit to them? (P. 265.)

" He that is most displeased at another Man's Error, may be as much deceived in his Understanding. (P. 266.)

" The word *Heresy* is used in Scripture indifferently, &c. (P. 18.)

" The further the Succession went from the Apostles, the more forward Men were in numbring Heresies, and that upon slighter and more uncertain grounds. (P. 32.)

" I am willing to believe their sense of the word *Heresy* was more gentle than it is now. (P. 39.)

" They whose Age and Spirits were far distant from the Apostles, had also other judgments concerning Faith and Heresy, than the Apostles had. (Ibid.)

" In all the Animadversions against Errors by the Apostles, no pious Person was condemn'd, no Man that did invincibly err, or *bona mente*; but something that was amiss in *genere morum*, was that which the Apostles did reargue. (P. 22.)

" If a Man mingles not a Vice with his Opinion, tho' he be deceiv'd in his Doctrine, his Error is his Misery, not his Crime; it makes him an Argument of weakness and an object of pity, but not a Person sealed up to ruin and reprobation. (P. 24.)

" The Epistle of *Constantine* to *Alexander* and *Arius*, tells the truth, and chides them both.—The Emperor calls their Different a vain piece of a Question, and a fruitless Contention.—For tho', says he, the Matter be grave; yet, because neither necessary, nor explicable, the Contention is trifling.—Christians should not fall at variance upon such Disputes; considering our Understandings are not all alike, and therefore neither can our Opinions in such mysterious Articles, &c. (P. 45.)

" This Letter was by *Socrates* called a wonderful Exhortation, full of grace and sober counsels; and such as *Hosius* himself, who was the Messenger, pressed with all earnestness. (P. 46.)

" The Apostles, who best understood these Mysteries, thought it not fit to use any words, in their Creed, but the words of Scripture; to shew us, that those Creeds are best which keep the very words of Scripture, and that that Faith is best which has the greatest Simplicity. If the *Nicene* Fathers had done so too, possibly the Church would never have repented it. (P. 47.)

“ Concerning the Symbol of *Athanasius*.—Nothing there but Damnation and Perishing everlastingly, unless the Article of the Trinity be believed, as it is there with curiosity and minute particularities explained.——Yet I dare not say all that are not persuaded of them, are irrevocably damn'd; because *citra hoc Sym-bolum* the Faith of the Apostles Creed is intire, &c. (P. 53, 54.)

[ Indeed, as was observed; Who gave Authority, to fallible Men, to make and impose New Creeds, or Magisterial Determinations, in these abstruse Matters? See what this learned Prelate says, on the account of the Miracles wrought by the *Arians*, in the 11<sup>th</sup>. Part of his Sermon, on *John*, 9. 31. ]

“ If it were considered concerning *Athanasius Creed*, how many People understand it not, how contrary to Natural Reason it seems, how little the Scripture says of those Curiosities of Explication, and how Tradition was not clear on his side for the Article it self, much less for those forms and minutes; it had not been amiss if the Final Judgment had been left to Jesus Christ, who is appointed Judge of all the World, and who will judge righteously, knowing every truth, &c. (P. 54.)

After this Passage, no more need be added; (I shall only point to Page 59, Line 28, &c. P. 60, L. 10, &c. P. 61, L. 11, &c. P. 63, L. 16, &c. P. 66, L. 9, &c. P. 67, L. 35, &c. P. 68, L. 8, &c. P. 78, L. 35, &c. P. 82, L. 33, &c. P. 84, L. 1, &c. P. 85, L. 18, &c. P. 86, L. 2, &c. P. 87, L. 13, &c. P. 99, L. 30, &c. P. 103, L. 36, &c. P. 121, L. 35, &c. P. 123, L. 9, &c. P. 124, L. 25, &c. P. 157, L. 6, &c. P. 160, L. 36, &c. P. 161, L. 32, &c. P. 165, L. 4, &c. P. 191, L. 4, &c. P. 195, L. 24, &c. P. 262, L. 8, &c. P. 263, L. 34, &c. P. 265, L. 5, &c. P. 266, L. 2, &c.) but for the rest, I refer the Reader to the Book it self, which I earnestly recommend to his serious perusal.

May it please the Lord Jesus to have Mercy upon Us, and to assist and save Us by his efficacious Intercession and by his Grace, for the Sake of his most precious Death and Passion, that We may not lose the Blessed Fruits of it, but may all become his true Disciples and be of the number of his Redeemed ones, being filled with his Holy Spirit, and abounding in all Christian Virtues!

And may Almighty God, in his infinite Compassions, for his beloved Son Jesus Christ's Sake, our Blessed Lord and Saviour, grant every sincere and inquisitive Christian, to discern and follow, so far as is necessary, the Ways of Truth, as well as of Righteousness; that, walking in the Paths of Peace and true Piety and Holiness, We may serve God acceptably all the Days of our Life, and in the end obtain the Salvation of our Souls. *Amen!*